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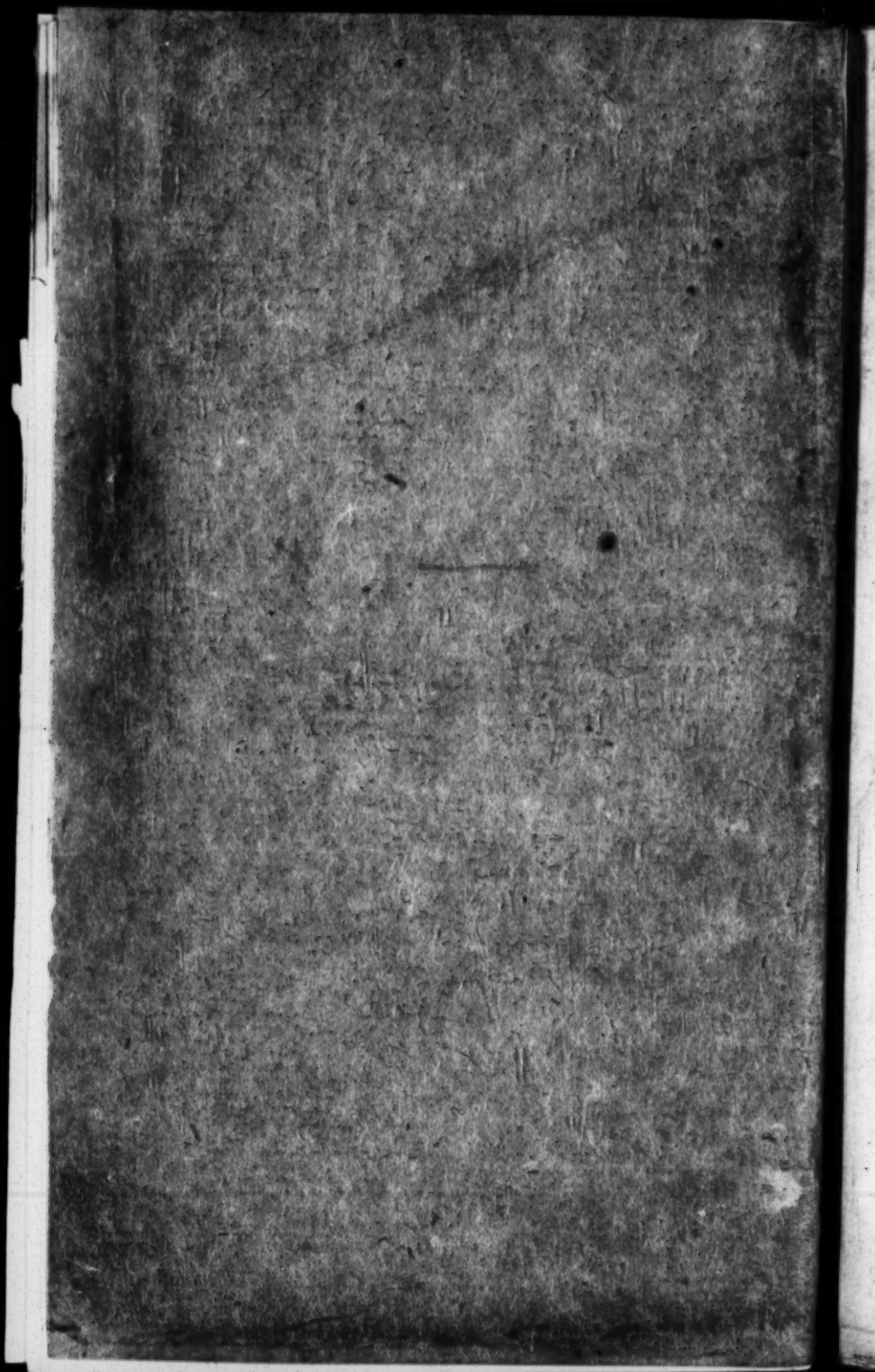
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THE
HISTORY OF
ENGLAND,

FROM
THE PEACE IN
1783.
TO THE PRESENT TIME:

BY
T. A. LLOYD, Esq.

Designed as a

Supplement

TO
HUME, SMOLLET, AND
CORMICK.

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sunt omnia debilitata jam prope et extincta.” CICERO.

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NICVM

THE
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TO THE PRESENT TIME.

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I. **T**HE provisional treaty of peace, while it terminated hostilities abroad, and seemed to promise a general repose to Europe; produced very different effects at home, by kindling a political war, which soon raged with uncommon violence, and considerably disturbed the internal tranquillity of the kingdom. The acknowledgment of American independence, though dictated by absolute necessity, was a measure so humiliating to the national character, that without being accompanied with terms as favorable to this country, as the nature of our situation entitled us to demand, could not be expected to prove generally acceptable. The advantages and disadvantages of the peace, were repeatedly discussed in parliament, with much ability by the leaders of the contending parties, but on every renewed debate, the opposition evidently gained ground. At last, on the 21st of February, Lord John Cavendish, by moving the following resolution among others in a very full house, brought the strength of the parties to a final issue, and obtained for opposition a complete and decisive victory. “That the concessions made to the adversaries of Great Britain by the provisional treaty, and the preliminary

articles are greater than they were entitled to, either from the actual situation of their respective possessions, or from their comparative strength." A vehement debate arose on this resolution, but the memorable coalition brought such an accession of strength and numbers to one side, that the question was carried against the ministry by a majority of 207 voices to 190.

II. The success of this motion ascertained the certainty of a ministerial revolution, and the house of commons adjourned from time to time, with the view of forwarding a new arrangement. The coalition, confident of their strength, were determined to enter into power upon such terms only, as would leave them at perfect liberty to act for themselves, without restraint or controul. The ministry were disposed to form an administration that would admit as few as possible of their adversaries; and for this purpose some fruitless attempts were made to disunite the members of the new association. Conferences with the king were repeatedly held on the subject of a change of ministers, and were repeatedly unsuccessful. The fortitude of the coalition was not to be shaken. Mr. Fox and his friends were determined not to deviate in any point from their preconcerted plan. From these ineffectual endeavours to accommodate party views, the business of the nation was suspended, and more than a month passed in a kind of ministerial interregnum.

III. The want of an efficient government could be at no time more severely felt than at this. At home the disembodiment of the militia, the discharge of seamen, the reduction of soldiers, the neglect of giving them their pay, and the spirit of turbulence natural to men accustomed to arms, contributed to fill Portsmouth and Plymouth with tumult and confusion, and spread mutinies and riots all over the kingdom. But these were not the only matters that called for the attention of government. Our negotiations with foreign powers were not brought to an end. No definitive treaty was concluded with France and Spain. No commercial alliance was adjusted
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with America, and the East India Company required the immediate aid of parliament both with regard to its foreign and domestic concerns.

IV. Such was the state of public affairs, when Mr. Coke, member for Norfolk, moved, on the 24th of March, an address to the king, "That he would be graciously pleased to take into consideration the distracted and unsettled state of the empire, and condescend to a compliance with the wishes of this house, by forming an administration entitled to the confidence of his people." This address was unanimously carried, and presented to the king, by such members of the house as were privy counsellors. His majesty replied, "That it was his earnest desire to do every thing in his power to comply with the wishes of his faithful commons."—This answer not being deemed sufficiently explicit, lord Surrey moved, in a few days after, another address, framed in very strong and pointed terms, "Assuring his majesty that all delays in a matter of this moment, have an inevitable tendency to weaken the authority of his government, and most humbly intreating his majesty that he will take such measures towards this object as may quiet the anxiety and apprehension of his faithful subjects." But Mr. Pitt, declaring that he had resigned his office of chancellor of the exchequer, and that any resolution or address relative to a new arrangement of administration was unnecessary, Lord Surrey consented to withdraw his motion: and the ministers, who, reluctant to quit the luxury of power, had lingered in office to the last moment, now gave place to their determined and victorious antagonists.

V. The duke of Portland was placed at the head of the treasury; and lord John Cavendish was re-appointed chancellor of the exchequer; lord North and Mr. Fox were nominated joint secretaries of state, the first for the home, the latter for the foreign department; lord Kestel, who had recently resigned on account of his disapprobation of the peace, was again placed at the head of the admiralty; lord Stormont was created president of the

the council; and lord Carlisle was advanced to the post of lord privy seal. The great seal was put into commission: the chief justice Loughborough, so distinguished for political versatility, "Who could change and change and yet go on," being declared first lord commissioner; the earl of Northington was appointed to the government of Ireland; and Mr. Burke reinstated in his former post of paymaster of the forces. Of the seven cabinet ministers, the majority, who also occupied the most important posts of administration, were of the old whig, or Rockingham party. Lord Stormont, lord North, and lord Carlisle, contenting themselves rather with a participation of honors and emoluments, than of power.

VI. Notwithstanding, therefore, the admission of those tory lords into the ministry, it could not but be acknowledged, as to all the grand purposes of government, a WHIG administration: more especially when the ability, the vigor, and the decision of its efficient leader were justly and impartially estimated. But most unfortunately no impartial estimate of the merits of this novel and heterogeneous arrangement could be hoped. The coalition was indeed defended by its friends as a measure essential to the salvation of the country, and which the extraordinary difficulty and danger of the times not only called for, but rendered highly meritorious; but the more general opinion condemned the coalition, as a shameless sacrifice of honor, consistency, and rectitude, on the altar of ambition, interest, and revenge. A junction of persons whose principles were radically hostile, and which no effort of art, or length of time could assimilate, was not a measure likely to conciliate universal esteem; and though the coalition were enabled to support successfully the most violent contest for power that perhaps is to be found in the political history of this country, and ultimately to wrest the government from their antagonists, yet it operated to diminish public confidence in their measures; and therefore, while it obtained them a complete conquest, it sullied the honor, and deprived them of the more solid advantages of victory.

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VII. One of the first measures of the new ministry was to expedite the passing of a bill before pending, "for the purpose of preventing any writs of error or appeal from the kingdom of Ireland, from being received by any of his majesty's courts in Great Britain; and of renouncing in express terms, the legislative authority of the British parliament in relation to Ireland." This bill was a necessary consequence of the general plan of Irish emancipation; for the mere repeal of the declaratory act did not, in the contemplation of the common law, make any difference whatever in the relative situation of the two countries.

VIII. Mr. Fox lost no time in attempting to remove every obstacle which opposed the opening an immediate intercourse with America; and early in April he moved for liberty to bring in a "Bill for preventing any manifesto, certificate, or other document being required from any ships belonging to the United States of America, arriving from thence at any port of this kingdom; or upon entering or clearing out from any port of this kingdom, for any port within the United States." The bill in its original shape, was supposed to go too far, by extending an indulgence that might be made subservient to the practice of smuggling; an amendment was therefore adopted, limiting for a certain time the powers to be vested in the king, after which it was carried through the commons, and with some slight opposition passed the lords.

IX. The very critical situation of our affairs in the east next engaged the attention of parliament. The house of commons had appointed a select committee to examine into the state of the British dominions in India. In the prosecution of this important enquiry, it was discovered that the administration of justice in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, had been perverted to the base purposes of speculation, plunder, and oppression, and that corruption, fraud, and injustice, pervaded all the departments of the company's government in India.—These alarming discoveries produced a general unity of opinion

opinion amongst public men of every description, on the immediate necessity of taking some effectual step, to rescue the British name from disgrace, to restore to the natives the pure administration of mild and equal laws, and to secure and improve our territorial possessions in India.

X. With this view, the lord advocate for Scotland introduced a bill into the house of commons. This gentleman was peculiarly qualified for the undertaking. He had by indefatigable industry, and long and laborious investigation, made himself completely master of the subject. His system had for its object the establishment of a government in India, better adapted to the dispositions, habits, and prejudices of the inhabitants, than any hitherto attempted. But as this bill was afterwards superseded by one from another quarter, more extensive in its views, it is here unnecessary to detail its regulations.

XI. To a representation of the defects and abuses of Indian government, succeeded in a few days a disclosure of the ruined state of the company's finances, by a bill introduced by Sir Henry Fletcher, "For suspending the payments of the company now due to the royal exchequer, and for enabling them to borrow the sum of three hundred thousand pounds for their farther relief."

XII. Lord John Cavendish declared this bill to be only a branch of a larger plan; and that it was brought forward separately, in order to answer an exigency which did not admit of delay. His lordship viewed the territorial acquisitions of the company as a fruitful source of grievance. "It would," he observed, "have been more for their advantage, had they confined themselves to the character of merchants. As these acquisitions, however, had been made, they must be preserved, and it was his opinion, that the relief necessary to the company should be granted."

XIII. In the upper house, Lord Fitzwilliam dwelt on the desperate situation of the East India company, and affirmed, "that, unless the bill passed, their bankruptcy would be inevitable. The expenditure of their settlements

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ments had far exceeded their revenue; bills had been drawn upon them which they were unable to answer without a temporary supply, so that the existence of the company depended upon the success of the bill;" which accordingly passed both houses with little difficulty or opposition.

XIV. Here it may not be improper to remark, that about this period, intelligence was received of an event, that opened a prospect of a favorable change to our affairs in the east. This was peace being concluded with the Mahrattas. This advantage to Great Britain, and to the East India company, was soon followed by the death of Hyder Ally, a man, eminently distinguished, for an enterprising spirit, resources, and vigor of mind; who entertained the most rooted aversion to the English name; and who by his power, courage, and military skill, had long proved himself, the most daring and formidable of all the company's enemies.

XV. On the 16th of April, the chancellor of the exchequer brought forward his plan for raising twelve millions by loan. The most remarkable circumstances attending it were, that the money borrowed was funded at three per cent, at the extravagant rate of one hundred and fifty pounds stock, for every hundred pound sterling; so that an artificial capital of six millions, was created above the sum actually paid into the exchequer. The evils resulting from this mode of funding were exposed with much ability by Mr. Pitt in the lower house, and the earl of Shelburne in the upper, but with no effect.

XVI. The former motion of Mr. Pitt for an enquiry into the state of the representation being negatived, he now brought forward (May 7th) a specific plan for adding one hundred members to the counties, and abolishing a proportionable number of the burghage-tenure, and other small and obnoxious boroughs. The revival of this important subject, which had deeply agitated the public mind, produced an animated debate; in the course of which, the discordant sentiments of ministers did not fail to awaken afresh the resentment of the house against the "ill-starred coalition."

XVII.

XVII. Lord North, in a strain of allusive pleasantry declared, "That, while some with Lear, demanded an hundred knights, and others with Goneril, were satisfied with fifty, he with Regan exclaimed, No, not ONE." His lordship, entering into a graver and more argumentative vein, proceeded to deny, "that the house of commons had not its full and proper weight in the scale of government; his political life was a proof that it had. It was parliament that made him a minister. He came amongst them without connection. It was to them he was indebted for his rise, and they had pulled him down; he had been the creature of their opinion, and of their power; his political career was consequently a proof of their independence; the voice of the commons was sufficient to remove whatever was displeasing to the sentiments and wishes of the country; and in such a situation to *parade* about a reform was idle, unnecessary, inexpedient, and dangerous."

XVIII. Mr. Fox, whose opinion on this great national question, was totally irreconcilable with that of his brother secretary's; very honorably for himself, preferred the consistency of public character to every consideration, either of private friendship, or parliamentary attachments. "In his opinion the constitution required innovation and renovation. Its nature exposed it to change; and its beauty did not consist in theory but in practice. The contrary opinion he knew to be common; but he was not the less attached to his sentiments, because they were sometimes singular. He thought the English constitution admirable in practice, and very faulty in theory; and he regarded it as one of its chief excellencies, that it was capable of renewed improvements by involving in itself a renovating principle. It might thus be gradually carried to perfection."

XIX. While the discussion of this important subject exposed the absurdity of one coalition; it is very remarkable that it paved the way for another in every view certainly as singular and extraordinary. The Lord Advocate for Scotland, who had all along distinguished himself

himself by his zeal for high prerogative, suspended upon the present occasion his natural sentiments, became at once a convert to the doctrine of reform, and asserted his entire approbation of Mr. Pitt's resolutions. He stood up boldly the advocate of the people, and affirmed, "that the yielding to their wishes would be the happiest means of putting an end to their complaints; and would certainly give a fresh infusion of fine blood into the constitution of the house of commons." Though the lord advocate and Mr. Pitt had been in office together during the short-lived Shelburne administration, they had continued until now rather shy than familiar, but this unexpected support and patriotic effusion effected a cordial and lasting union between those two celebrated characters. But after all the support Mr. Pitt's motion and resolutions met with, they were lost by a majority of 293 to 149.

XX. Whatever may be the language or views of party, it must be evident to every impartial mind interested in the welfare of Britain, that the house of commons is far from answering all the salutary ends of its institution. If on the one hand, we contemplate the extent of power delegated to the representative; and on the other, survey the temptations to abuse that power, to which he is confessedly exposed; the defects of the present system will appear obvious, and the necessity of placing in the hands of the people an additional check, and a more effectual controul over his parliamentary conduct, must be felt and acknowledged. While it is admitted that most of the boroughs are the property of individuals, who can only look to the crown for honors and emoluments; the minister must possess a power in the house of commons incompatible with the general interests of the people. No political truth has been more completely ascertained by experience than this; and the bold assertion of lord North "that his administration was a proof of the independence of the house of commons" might perhaps have had some degree of weight, could it be lost to the public recollection,

tion, that the noble lord was originally advanced to the premiership by the *fiat* of the *executive power*, and was continued in office, during the first and last years of his administration at least, by the influence of the same power, in daring contrariety to the clear, unanimous, and decided sense of the nation. His lordship's compulsive resignation at last, proved only that there are limits, beyond which, even the complaisance of the representative body does not extend.

XXI. Mr. Pitt having failed in his attempt to improve the constitution of the house of commons, the inflexible patriot Mr. alderman Sawbridge brought forward, May 16, his motion for shortening the duration of parliaments. He observed "that he had heard the British constitution characterized on a former day, as the most glorious fabric, the work of ages, and the wonder of the world. To him such a description appeared most absurd; and he was happy that no foreigners had been present at the time, as they might have been too much diverted at the expence of the member who had indulged himself so extravagantly in panegyric. It was his rooted persuasion, that the British constitution, till the decollation of that tyrant Charles the first, was a system of the most wretched despotism. No gleam of liberty had ever shone out till after that æra. Antecedently to the domination of Charles, the country had been a monarchical tyranny, or an aristocratical tyranny. Under both these descriptions it was miserable; and the people were no better than slaves. In antient times there had indeed, existed violent contentions and feuds; but these were experiments for power between the king and the barons; between the crown and the great men of the realm. The people took no real interest in them. They never felt their dignity, never inquired into their rights, and never asserted them; till they were thrown into combustion by the atrocious tyranny of the first Charles. It was of consequence, in late times only, that the flame of public liberty illuminated the constitution. It was in late times only that our constitution had become
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the wonder of the world. To talk of it as having been so for ages, was to falsify records and history." The motion of Mr. Sawbridge was seconded by Mr. alderman Bull, and warmly supported by the earl of Surrey and others, but was lost by a majority of 123 to 56.

XXII. A bill for regulating the trade of the African company, being introduced towards the close of the session, with a clause prohibiting the officers of the company from exporting negroes, that humane, intelligent, and respectable class of citizens, known by the appellation of quakers, convened in their annual assembly in the metropolis, embraced this favourable occasion to petition the house of commons, "That the clause in question might be extended to all persons whatsoever, professing themselves deeply affected with the consideration of the rapine, oppression, and blood attending this traffic: under the countenance of the laws of this country, say the petitioners, many thousands of these our fellow-creatures, entitled to the *natural rights of mankind*, are held as personal property in cruel bondage. Your petitioners regret, that a nation professing the christian faith should so far counteract the principles of humanity and justice." This petition awakened in a remarkable degree, the compassion of the house, and of the public, for those unhappy beings to whose wretched lot it has fallen, "to plough the winter's wave and reap despair;" and laid the foundation of the subsequent noble and generous, though hitherto unsuccessful efforts, to effect a total abolition of this detestable and inhuman commerce.

XXIII. A variety of business comprehending details not sufficiently important to claim a place in history, having been completed; the parliament was at length prorogued, July 16, by a speech, in which his Majesty declared his intention of calling them together at an early period, in order to resume the consideration of the affairs of the East-Indies, which would demand their most serious and unintermitted attention.

XXIV. In the course of the summer, few material events

events occurred deserving of particular notice. The king, by virtue of an act passed for that purpose, issued an order in council, limiting the commerce between the continent of America and the British West-India islands, to ships British built. This was conformable to the grand principle on which the act of navigation was originally founded; and though this restriction gave extreme offence to the inhabitants of the United States; they had certainly no just reason to complain, as they could have no possible right to claim the advantages of dependence and independence at one and the same time.

XXV. On the 3d of September the definitive treaties of peace with France, Spain, and America, were with some alteration signed; and also preliminaries of peace with the States General, by which all the conquests of England were restored, except the town of Negapatnam on the coast of Coromandel, which their High Mightinesses were at last most reluctantly compelled to cede.

XXVI. The unexpected and uncommon events connected with the history of the ensuing session, require for their better elucidation, a short characteristic sketch of the state of parties at the convening of parliament. The coalition administration was universally acknowledged to be able, powerful, and active. All men agreed to look up to them for something bold, enterprising, and decisive. It certainly embraced a happy combination of native genius and matured experience, of spirited adventure and sagacious hesitation. Nor were these qualities unattended with that circumstance, without which, no qualities can avail in such a situation, a just mass of weight, connexion, and interest. Their friends therefore thought, that such an administration comprised in it all that was requisite, to heal the wounds, restore the prosperity, and recover the honor of Britain.

XXVII. But the very same considerations that inspired their advocates with hope, were regarded by their opponents, as the fruitful sources of terror and misfortune. Their ability would be found only an ability to plan the destruction of their country; their influence

fluence an influence that would carry the worst measures as easily as the best; and their activity a restless enemy, against which, precaution and vigilance could be no protection. Such was in general the language of the opponents of administration. One class of men, who thought impropriety of *private* conduct, incompatible with public virtue; or who conceived that ample property was the most eligible security for ministerial rectitude; were by no means pleased to see Mr. Fox placed in so conspicuous a station. Another class, and that a very numerous one, had contracted such an extreme aversion to lord North's administration, that they could never be reconciled to his lordship's restoration to power, on any terms. A third party of the tory description, entertained a rooted dislike of administration, because in their opinion, they had daringly trenched on the sacred prerogative of majesty, and had "taken the closet of the sovereign by storm."

XXVIII. From this extreme difference of opinion between the adverse parties on the merits and demerits of administration, something may be collected of the spirit and views of both, at the period of convening the parliament of Great Britain; which took place so early as November 11, 1783.

XXIX. In the speech from the throne, his Majesty, after noticing the conclusion of peace with France, Spain, and America; and the ratification of the preliminary articles with the States General; stated as a principal object of their consideration, the situation of the East-India company. "The utmost exertions of their wisdom" he said "would be required to maintain and improve the valuable advantages derived from our India possessions; and to promote and secure the happiness of the native inhabitants of those provinces."

XXX. The address passed without opposition. Mr. Pitt in his speech on this occasion, warned the ministers "that as to the affairs of India, it would not be enough to attempt measures of palliation, and of a temporary nature; that would only increase the danger by removing

it to a distance, and he expressed his surprise that this important business had been so long postponed. Mr. Fox, well pleased at this language, acknowledged "that the state of India was such as would ill brook delay in their deliberations, and he was happy to give notice, that on that day se'nnight, he should be prepared to make a motion relative to India."

XXXI. On the 18th of November, accordingly, Mr. Fox moved for leave to bring in a bill for vesting the affairs of the East-India company in the hands of certain commissioners, for the benefit of the proprietary and the public. The plan proposed by Mr. Fox, was marked with all the characteristics of his ardent, daring, and luminous mind. The total derangement of the finances of the company, and their utter incompetency to govern the vast territories of which they had by very questionable means obtained the possession, was too evident to admit of contradiction. The evil was notorious, and difficult indeed was the task of devising an adequate remedy. This famous bill proposed to take at once from the directors and proprietors, the entire administration, both of their territorial and commercial affairs; and to vest the management and direction of them in the hands of seven commissioners named in the bill, and irremovable by the crown, except in consequence of an address of either house of parliament. These were earl Fitzwilliam, president of the board; George viscount Lewisham, the right honorable Frederic Montague, the honorable George Augustus North, sir Gilbert Elliot, sir Henry Fletcher, baronets; and Robert Gregory, esq; who, it was remarked, were divided upon the model, and in the same proportion as the members of the cabinet. These commissioners were to be assisted by a subordinate board of nine directors, to be named in the first instance, by parliament, and afterwards chosen by the proprietors.

XXXII. These commissioners and directors were empowered to enter immediately into possession of all lands, tenements, books, records, vessels, goods, merchandize,
and

and securities, in trust for the company. They were required to come to a decision upon every question within a limited time, or to assign a specific reason for their delay. They were never to vote by ballot, and they were almost in all cases, to enter upon their journals the reasons of their vote. They were to submit once in every six months an exact state of their accounts to the court of proprietors, and at the beginning of every session to present a statement of their affairs to both houses of parliament.

XXXIII. This system proposed by Mr. Fox, was no scheme of a day, calculated to postpone the hour of danger, and then leave destruction to fall with double ruin on his successors. It was no crude and indigested plan, the child of narrow and unextensive views, and brought forward under the cover of cowardice and irresolution. It comprehended the whole circle of evils complained of, and contained a remedy commensurate to their magnitude, and adequate to their cure. It was a bold measure full of decision and that demanded the severest scrutiny. What was asserted of its author by one of his warmest friends, will probably hold good, "that this bill, would in the decision of posterity, procure to his name immortal honour, or indelible disgrace. He may live long, (continues the speaker) he may do much. But here is the summit. He can never exceed what he does this day."

XXXIV. This bill which vested the government in commissioners, was to continue in force four years, that is, till the year after the next general election. It was accompanied by a second bill, enacting very excellent, wise, and equitable regulations for the future government of the British territories in Hindostan. It took from the governor-general all power of acting independently of his council. It declared every existing British power in India incompetent to the acquisition or exchange of any territory in behalf of the company;—to the acceding to any treaty of partition;—to the hiring out the company's troops; to the appointment to office of any person removed

ed for misdemeanour;—and to the hiring out any property to any civil servant of the company. It prohibited all monopolies; and also declared every illegal present recoverable by any person for his own sole benefit. But that part of the present bill, upon which the principal value seemed to be placed by its author, related to the Zemindars, or native landholders, whom it employed effectual means to secure in the possession of their respective inheritances, and to defend from oppression. It particularly endeavoured to preclude all vexatious and usurious claims that might be made upon them. It therefore prohibited mortgages, and subjected every doubtful claim to the examination and censure of the commissioners.

XXXV. It is scarcely possible to conceive the astonishment excited in the house of commons by the disclosure of this system. It was espoused with zeal and enthusiasm by the friends of the minister; and it was attacked by his opponents with all the vehemence of indignation, and all the energy of invective. It was on one side of the house extolled as a master piece of genius, virtue, and ability; while on the other it was reprobated as a deep and dangerous design, fraught with mischief and ruin. Mr. Pitt distinguished himself on this occasion as a formidable adversary of the minister. He acknowledged, “that India indeed wanted a reform, but not such a reform as this: it wanted a *constitutional* alteration, and not a *tyrannical* one, that broke through every principle of equity and justice. By the bill before the house an attack was made on the most solemn charters: it pointed a fatal blow against the faith and integrity of parliament: it broke through every tie by which man was bound to man. The principle of this bill once established, what security had the other public companies of the kingdom? What security had the bank of England? What security had the national creditors, or the public corporations? Or indeed, what assurance could we have for the GREAT CHARTER itself, the foundation of all our liberties? It would be fully in the
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extreme to suppose, that the principle, once admitted, would operate only on the present occasion. Good principles might sleep, but bad ones never. It was the curse of society, that when a bad principle was once established, bad men would always be found to give it its full effect. The bill under consideration included a confiscation of the property, and a disfranchisement of the members of the East-India company; all the several articles of whose effects, were transferred by violence to strangers. Imagination was at a loss to guess at the most insignificant trifle that had escaped the harpy jaws of a ravenous coalition. The power was pretended indeed to be given in trust for the benefit of the proprietors; but in case of the grossest abuse of trust, to whom was the appeal? To the proprietors? No;—to the majority of either house of parliament, which the most contemptible minister could not fail to secure, with the patronage of above two millions sterling given by this bill. The influence which would accrue from this bill—a new, enormous, and unexampled influence,—was indeed in the highest degree alarming. Seven commissioners chosen ostensibly by parliament, but really by administration, were to involve in the vortex of their authority, the patronage and treasures of India. The right honorable mover, had acknowledged himself to be a man of ambition, and it now appeared that he was prepared to sacrifice the king, the parliament, and the people at the shrine of his ambition. He desired to elevate his present connections to a situation in which no political convulsions, and no variations of power, might be able to destroy their importance, and terminate their ascendancy."

XXXVI. On the other hand, Mr. Fox with astonishing eloquence and ability vindicated the bill. To the charge of violating the company's charter; he replied, "that certainly persons who talked thus had never read the other act by which the company's charters had been again and again altered to a great extent. The regulating act of 1773, had effected various changes, and had given the whole military and civil government to
parliamentary

parliamentary commissioners in India. The different acts by which the dividends of the company had been restrained, had pointed directly at their commercial concerns, and affected their property. He had been warned by his opponents against palliatives and half-measures; and he should be glad to hear how it was possible to adapt a new system by parliamentary authority, without striking at those charters, which entitled the company to continue the old one. He had adverted to the plea of necessity; and it was objected to him, that necessity was the creed of slaves. He would tell those objectors, that it was also the creed of freemen. Every syllable that had been uttered respecting the intangibility of claims made venerable by prescription and parchments, was a battery against the main pillars of the British constitution. The arguments therefore of his opponents, might have been adopted with additional propriety, by king James the second. He might have claimed the property of dominion; but what had been the language of the people? No, you have no property in dominion;—dominion was vested in you, as it is in every chief magistrate, for the benefit of the community to be governed. It was a sacred trust delegated by compact. You have abused the trust. You have exercised dominion for the purpose of vexation and tyranny, not of comfort, protection, and good order. We therefore resume the power which was originally ours. We recur to the first principles of all government, *the will of the many*; and it is our will that you shall no longer abuse your dominion. I am also (continued Mr. Fox,) charged with increasing the influence, and giving an immense accession of power to the crown. But certainly this bill as little augments the influence of the crown, as any measure that could be devised for the government of India, with the slightest promise of success. The very genius of influence consisted in hope or fear; fear of losing what we had, or hope of gaining more. Make the commissioners removable at will, and you set all the little passions of human nature afloat. Invest them with power, upon the same

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tenure as the British judges hold their station, removable upon delinquency, punishable upon guilt, but fearless of danger if they discharge their trust; and they will be liable to no seducement, and will execute their functions with glory to themselves, and for the common good of the country and mankind. This bill presumes the possibility of bad administration, for every word in it breathes suspicion. It supposes that men are but men; it confides in no integrity;—it trusts to no character. It annexes responsibility, not only to every action, but even to the inaction of the powers it has created. He would risk (he said) his all upon the excellence of this bill. He would risk upon it whatever was most dear to him, whatever men most valued, the character of integrity, of talents, of honour, of present reputation and future fame:—these he would stake upon the constitutional safety, the enlarged policy, the equity and wisdom of the measure. Whatever therefore might be the fate of its authors, he had no fear that it would produce to this country every blessing of commerce and revenue; and by extending a generous and humane government over those millions whom the inscrutable dispensations of providence had placed under us in the remotest regions of the earth; it would consecrate the name of England among the noblest of nations."

XXXVII. While the bill was pending in the commons, a petition was presented by the East India company, representing the measure as subversive of their charter, and operating as a confiscation of their property without charging against them any specific delinquency; without trial, without conviction; a proceeding contrary to the most sacred privileges of British subjects; and praying to be heard by counsel against the bill. The city of London also took the alarm, and presented a strong petition to the same effect. But it was carried with uncommon rapidity through all its stages in the house of commons by decisive majorities, the division on the second reading being 217 to 103 voices.

XXXVIII. On the 9th of December Mr. Fox, attended

tended by a numerous train of members presented the bill at the bar of the house of lords. On this occasion earl Temple declared, "that he was happy to embrace the first opportunity of entering his protest against so INFAMOUS a bill; against a stretch of power so truly alarming, and that went near to seize upon the most inestimable part of our constitution—our CHARTERED RIGHTS." Lord Thurlow on the same side, asserted, "that, in the first instance, the bill was an atrocious violation of private property, and could only be justified by the strongest necessity; that if such necessity existed, it must be proved by evidence at the bar of the house, and not by reports from a committee, to which he should pay as much attention as to the romance of Robinson Crusoe. Could parliament forget that the politics of this country, had involved the company in an extensive and ruinous war? and that while we encountered loss, misfortune, and disgrace in every other quarter of the globe, this delinquent company had surmounted the most astonishing difficulties in India? Would parliament forget that when peace was restored to this unfortunate country, the conquests of this delinquent company were given up to prevent farther sacrifices of our more favorite possessions?"

XXXIX. The second reading of the bill took place on the 15th of December, when counsel was heard at the bar in behalf of the company: and on the 17th it was moved that the bill be rejected. On this occasion lord Camden spoke with great ability against the bill, which his lordship affirmed to be "in the highest degree pernicious and unconstitutional. To divest the company of the management of their own property, and commercial concerns, was to treat them as IDEOTS; and he regarded the bill, not so much in the light of a commission of bankruptcy as of lunacy. But as a means of throwing an enormous addition of weight into the scale, not of legal, but ministerial influence, it was still more alarming. Were this bill to pass into a law, his lordship forcibly declared, we should see the king of England and the

the king of Bengal contending for superiority in the British parliament." After a vehement debate, the motion of rejection was carried by 95 against 76 voices.

XL. Such was the concluding scene of an administration from whose vigor its partisans had conceived the most sanguine hopes; and whose strength had been represented by its enemies so vast and irresistible, as would in its progress break down all the barriers of the constitution. As the first divisions in the upper house were favorable to this bill, it will naturally be imagined that such a sudden and remarkable change of sentiment, must have been occasioned by the intervention of some powerful cause, adequate to so extraordinary and unexpected an effect: and as the solution of this phenomenon will serve as a key to subsequent transactions of some importance, it particularly merits insertion. It is true, the secret and silent event that produced this grand revolution is not susceptible of legal demonstration; but the fact has been sufficiently ascertained to deserve a place in history. On the 11th of December, earl Temple had a conference with his majesty, which appears principally to have turned on the bill then pending in parliament. Though it was generally believed that the most entire cordiality and confidence on all points did not subsist between the king and his ministers, yet upon this measure they had obtained his perfect concurrence. It was probably the language that had been held by some of the members in the house of commons, who, in the heat of debate had asserted, that if the bill passed into a law, the crown would be no longer worth wearing, that first excited doubts in the royal breast. Earl Temple, however, in the conference alluded to, having clearly and fully explained his ideas on the nature and tendency of the bill, the sovereign became at once a complete convert to the views and system of opposition. In consequence of this change of sentiment, the royal indignation was excited in a very high degree. The monarch considered himself as having been duped and deceived by his confidential servants. A card was immediately written, stating, "that
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his majesty allowed earl Temple to say, that whoever voted for the India bill was not only *not his* friend, but would be considered by him as his enemy. And if these words were not strong enough, earl Temple might use whatever words he might deem stronger or more to the purpose."

XLI. An interference of so extraordinary a nature, was not likely to pass without animadversion and censure. Mr. William Baker, accordingly, moved the house of commons on the 17th, the very day that the bill was rejected by the lords; "That it was now necessary to declare, that to report any opinion, or pretended opinion of the king upon any bill, or other proceeding depending in either house of parliament, with a view to influence the votes of the members, was an high crime and misdemeanour." Mr. Pitt treated the motion lightly, and represented it as unworthy the dignity of the house to found any resolutions upon rumors and hearsays. The moment ministers could not answer for their own measures, let them retire. The servants of the crown, he said, were worse than useless, whenever they were without responsibility. Mr. Fox replied to Mr. Pitt in a style of glowing eloquence: "When the hour comes," said the secretary, "and it may not be very distant, that shall dismiss me from the service of the public; the honorable gentleman's example of lingering in office, after the voice of the nation had called him to quit it, shall not be mine. I did not come in by the fiat of majesty, though by that fiat I am not unwilling to go out. The people of England have made me what I am. It was at their instance, I have been called to a station in their service, and perhaps it will not be treating them well, hastily to abandon the post to which they have raised me. I ever stood, and wish only to stand on public ground: I have too much pride ever to owe any thing to secret influence: I will not even be the minister of a great and free people on any condition derogatory to my honor as a gentleman. It is impossible," continued he, "not to be surprised at the extreme eagerness
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ness of the honorable gentleman about our places. If however a change must take place, and a new ministry is to be formed and supported, not by the confidence of this house or the public, but the sole authority of the crown, I for one, shall not envy the honorable gentleman his situation. From that moment I put in my claim to a monopoly of whig principles. The glorious cause of freedom, of independence, and of the constitution, is no longer his, but mine. In this I have lived, in this I will die. It has borne me up under every aspersions to which my character has been subjected. The resentments of the mean, and the aversion of the great; the rancour of the vindictive, and the subtilty of the base; the dereliction of friends, and the efforts of enemies, have not all diverted me from the line of conduct which I had originally chosen." After an animated debate the house divided upon the question, when Mr. Baker's resolution was carried by a majority of 73.

XLII. This contest between the crown and the commons presented to the public a scene truly novel and interesting. Prerogative and privilege at war, is one of those alarming events, which the wisdom of preceding reigns had taken care to prevent. Indeed the power of the house of commons as the popular branch of the legislature, had been so fully admitted on all hands, that it had long obtained the character of omnipotent. The crown therefore boldly entering the lists with the commons, exhibited a conduct without example in the annals of the present royal family. Since the revolution, the kings of England, satisfied with the ample revenues of their civil list, with the complaisance and attention of their ministers, and with that extensive and over-ruling influence which enabled them to accomplish their views, appeared to have quietly acquiesced in this limitation of their authority. To resume a claim that seemed already to have been yielded; to enter into open war with the house of commons; and to bid defiance to their resolutions, was certainly a conduct not easily to be reconciled with the principles of the British constitution; and which

required no uncommon firmness and resolution to support. On the other hand the situation of the prince was critical. He had gone perhaps too far to be able to recede. He had certainly shown much displeasure against his ministers, and that too in a style rather of hostility than of conciliation. To receive them again into his confidence, was to sacrifice the feelings of personal dignity and personal pique, to the benefit of the community. It was to do something more; it was to lower the tone of prerogative, a concession that few princes ever cheerfully made to the wishes of their people. To have carried the question to a violent extreme, and afterwards submit to a recantation, would have been deemed a signal dishonor, an indelible disgrace. Besides these difficulties, which such a case must at all times have involved, there was one peculiar to the present crisis. The ministers were committed upon their Indian system, and could not without a total sacrifice of personal independence and the reputation of principle, abandon the scheme. In the mean time the sovereign had declared himself in the most peremptory terms adverse to the measure; and under such circumstances, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to discover a medium to preserve unwounded the honor of both.

XLIII. An entire change of administration was therefore at all hazards determined upon; and accordingly at midnight on the 18th of December, a royal message was sent to the secretaries of state, demanding the seals of their several departments, and at the same time directing that they should be delivered to the sovereign by the under secretaries, as a personal interview would be disagreeable. Early next morning letters of dismissal, signed Temple, were sent to the other members of the cabinet. In a few days after, Mr. Pitt was declared first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer, the marquis of Carmarthen and Mr. Thomas Townshend, created lord Sydney, were nominated secretaries of state; lord Thurlow was reinstated as lord chancellor; earl Gower as president of the council; the duke of Rutland was constituted

stituted lord privy seal; lord Howe placed at the head of the admiralty; and the duke of Richmond of the ordinance. The earl of Northington was recalled from his government of Ireland, to which lord Temple, who had retained the seals of secretary only three days, was again appointed to succeed.

XLIV. On the 22d of December the house of commons, being in a committee on the state of the nation, Mr. Erskine moved, "That an address be presented to the king, stating, that alarming reports had gone forth of an intended dissolution of parliament, and humbly representing to his majesty, the inconveniences and dangers of a prorogation or dissolution in the present conjuncture; and entreating the sovereign to hearken to the advice of that house, and not to the secret advice of particular persons who might have private interests of their own, separate from the true interests of the king and people."— This address was carried without a division, and on the 24th was presented to the sovereign who returned the following answer. "Gentlemen, it has been my constant object to employ the authority intrusted to me by the constitution to its true and only end, the good of my people; and I am always happy in concurring with the wishes and opinions of my faithful commons. I agree with you in thinking that the support of the public credit and revenue must demand your most earnest and vigilant care. The state of the East Indies is also an object of as much delicacy and importance as can exercise the wisdom and justice of parliament. I trust you will proceed in these considerations with all convenient speed, after such an adjournment as the present circumstances may seem to require; and I assure you, that I shall not interrupt your meeting, by any exercise of my prerogative either of prorogation or dissolution."

1784. XLV. The house now with tolerable satisfaction adjourned for the usual Christmas recess to the 10th of January, 1784; on which day the committee on the state of the nation was resumed; and several resolutions were brought forward by Mr. Fox, and agreed to by the

house; prohibiting the lords of the treasury from assenting to the acceptance of the company's bills from India; forbidding also the issue of any of the public money after a prorogation or dissolution of parliament, unless the act of appropriation shall have previously passed; and ordering accounts to be laid before the house of the monies already issued. These resolutions were followed by a motion from the earl of Surrey, "1. That in the present situation of his majesty's dominions it was peculiarly necessary that there should be an administration that had the confidence of the public. 2. That the late changes in his majesty's councils were accompanied with circumstances new and extraordinary, and such as did not conciliate the confidence of that house. On this motion the house divided, but it was carried in the affirmative by 196 to 142 voices.

XLVI. On the 16th of January a resolution was moved by lord Charles Spencer, "That the continuance of the present ministers in trusts of the highest importance and responsibility, was contrary to the principles of the constitution, and injurious to the interests of the king and people." Upon this question the house divided, ayes 205, noes 184; so that the anti-ministerial majority was reduced by defection from 54 to 21 voices.

XLVII. About this time the chancellor of the exchequer introduced into the house, a bill for the better government of India, on principles which left the commercial concerns of the company in their own hands; and established a board of controul, consisting of certain commissioners appointed by the king, possessing a negative on the proceedings of the company in all matters of government. On the motion of commitment, this bill was lost by 222 against 214—so that the opposition majority was now diminished by an ominous defection to 8.

XLVIII. Whatever hopes the present cabinet might form, from this flattering accession of parliamentary strength, they were still more encouraged by the addresses of thanks to the king for the removal of his late ministers, which now began to pour in from every quarter of

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the kingdom. In this the city of London took the lead, and in their address they say, "your faithful citizens lately beheld with infinite concern the progress of a measure which equally tended to encroach on the right of your majesty's crown—to annihilate the chartered rights of the East India company—and to raise a power unknown to this free government, and highly inimical to its safety. As this dangerous measure was warmly supported by your majesty's late ministers, we heartily rejoice in their dismissal, and humbly thank your majesty for exerting your prerogative in a manner so salutary and constitutional." And concluding in a style widely different from the usual tenor of their addresses on former occasions, they say, "Highly sensible of your majesty's paternal care and affection for your people, we pray the Almighty that you may long reign in peace over a free, an happy, and united nation."

XLIX. Though the dismissal of the late ministers originated in a cause merely accidental, and on the part of the crown from a sudden and strong resentment at a supposed invasion of the prerogative; yet the monarch acquired a popularity by the measure that effaced for a time all recollection of former disagreements; and elevated the loyalty of the people to a degree of ardor, which court flattery itself cannot but acknowledge was at least commensurate with the merits of the sovereign. However grateful this circumstance might prove to the royal feelings, and however acceptable to the ministers; it still failed in securing to government the advantage most essential to the interests of the country, an ascendancy in the house of commons. Nor could the opposition expect to possess long the ground they now occupied. Every gazette threatened them with three or four addresses of thanks for their late removal from power; their numbers were daily falling off, and under such circumstances the most sanguine could not hope for ultimate success. Both parties therefore alarmed at the novel and dangerous situation of the country, seemed at length disposed to pause; and a number of respectable independent members having expressed a strong desire, that the great leaders of
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both sides would unite and form an administration on a broad and comprehensive basis, the idea was listened to with such general approbation as held out for a time a tolerable prospect of its being carried into effect.

L. With a view to forward this general union of parties, a meeting had been repeatedly held at the St. Alban's tavern, formed of the independent interest of the house of commons. These gentlemen, finding their endeavours fruitless, in attempting to induce Mr. Pitt to an actual or virtual resignation of office; or to bring the duke of Portland to negotiate on any other terms; came at last to the resolution that a message should be sent from the king desiring an interview between his grace and Mr. Pitt, as the only remaining expedient that could preserve unfulfilled the honor of both, without any concession of principle on either side. His majesty accordingly complied with this request, and sent a message to the duke of Portland expressing his desire that an interview might take place between his grace and Mr. Pitt, for the purpose of arranging a new plan of administration on *fair* and *equal* terms. The duke, previous to such interview, requested to be informed in what sense he was to understand the words *fair* and *equal*; and Mr. Pitt declining any explanation, the negotiation finally terminated.

LI. The king and the nation at large were now evidently and openly united in sentiment against the commons; and the house of peers, who had hitherto remained the silent and passive spectators of this extraordinary contest, thought proper to come forward at this time, and at the motion of the earl of Effingham their lordship's resolved, "1. That an attempt in any one branch of the legislature to suspend the execution of law, by separately assuming to itself the direction of a discretionary power vested by act of parliament, is unconstitutional. 2. That by the known principles of the constitution the undoubted authority of appointing to the great offices of the executive government was solely vested in the king; and that this house had every reason to place the firmest reliance on his majesty's wisdom in the exercise of this prerogative."

tive." These resolutions, shaped in the form of an address, were presented to the king. It was not to be supposed that so direct an attack upon the authority and wisdom of the commons, would be passed over in silence.— In return therefore they resolved, at the motion of lord Beauchamp, "1. That the house had not assumed to itself a right to suspend the execution of law, and 2. that for them to declare their opinion respecting the exercise of any discretionary power was constitutional and agreeable to established usage."

LII. The opposition, who were still the majority of the house of commons, found themselves daily in a more embarrassing situation. But no difficulties however pressing, no dangers however formidable, could subdue their spirit, or suspend their exertions. On the 18th of February, previous to the house entering on business, Mr. Pitt thought proper to acquaint them, not as a message from the king, but as a piece of information he conceived himself pledged to communicate, "That his majesty had not yet, in compliance with the resolutions of the house, thought proper to dismiss his ministers, and that his ministers had not resigned." This intimation so far affected the temper and feelings of the house, that it was found necessary to adjourn for two days, in order to recover a state of mind suitable to the discussion of a question, which involved the character, the attributes, and the existence of the popular branch of the legislature. On the 20th of February the house met again, and an address, carried by a majority of 20 voices only, was presented to the king, expressive of "the reliance the house had on the wisdom of the sovereign, that he would take such measures as might tend to give effect to the wishes of his faithful commons, by removing every obstacle to the formation of such an administration as the house of commons had declared to be requisite." To this the king again replied in terms happily adapted to the occasion. He mentioned "his recent endeavours to unite in the public service, on a fair and equal footing, those whose joint efforts might have a tendency to put an end to the unhappy

happy divisions and distractions of the country. Observing, at the same time, that there was no specific charge or complaint suggested against his present ministers, and that numbers of his subjects had expressed to him in the warmest manner their satisfaction at the late changes. Under these circumstances he trusted his faithful commons would not wish that the essential offices of the executive government should be vacated until such a plan of union as he had called for, and they had pointed out, could be carried into effect."

LIII. This answer was by no means satisfactory, and on the first of March a yet stronger address was moved and carried, but by a still smaller majority than the last. The house, "humbly besought his majesty that he would be graciously pleased to lay the foundation of a strong and stable government, *by the previous removal of his present ministers.*" To this address, which went directly to the point at issue, and left no room for evasion; the king replied in the same mild and firm language as before, repeating, "that no charge nor complaint, nor any specific objection, was yet made against any of his present ministers;" and adding this remarkable observation, "that if there were any just grounds for their removal, it ought to be equally a reason for not admitting them as a part of that extended and united administration which is stated to be requisite."

LIV. The measure of addressing having been fully and unavailingly tried, and it now appearing unquestionably clear, that any farther experiment of this kind would prove useless and nugatory; Mr. Fox, in the following week, moved a REPRESENTATION to the crown, a mode of addressing to which no answer was customary, and which at great length, and in energetic language, stated, "the dangerous and pernicious tendency of those measures and maxims, by which a new system of executive government had been set up, which wanting the confidence of that house, and acting in defiance of their resolutions, must prove at once inadequate by its inefficiency to the necessary objects of government, and danger-

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ous by its example to the liberties of the people." This motion was carried by a majority of ONE.

LV. On the following day, Mr. Fox perceiving himself deserted by many of his partizans, abandoned his original intention of moving the postponement of the mutiny bill, as a security against a sudden and premature dissolution. Here then the contest finally terminated, and administration obtained a complete victory. The general sense of the nation in favor of the new ministers, which could no longer be doubted, was ascribed to an unparalleled delusion; but as Mr. Fox now disclaimed any intention of obstructing the supplies, a dissolution was said, with strong appearance of reason, to be in the highest degree indefensible. Little attention, however, was paid to the arguments of opposition against a measure so evidently to the advantage of the present ministers; and therefore on the 24th of March the parliament was prorogued, and the next day dissolved by proclamation, and a new parliament convened to meet on the 18th of May.

LVI. If the origin, progress, and conclusion of this astonishing contest, are impartially reviewed; and the principles and conduct of the leading characters concerned, candidly examined; it will appear upon the whole one of the most extraordinary events to be found in the latter periods of English history. The supposed merit of the crown in this transaction, has been already traced to a circumstance purely accidental; originating in a jealousy of power, and having for its *sole* object the preservation of undiminished prerogative. This consideration therefore, if taken alone, can by no means account for the general concurrence of the nation in the dismissal of the late ministers. Had the point at issue between the contending parties, been only a question of prerogative, the public feelings, always in favour of the popular branch of the legislature, would have taken another direction, and been expressed in language and addresses very different from the style of those which appeared on this occasion. To ascertain then, the true causes, which combined to produce such a ferment in the public mind, against the

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house of commons, we must survey the respective situations of the two great leaders, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Pitt, at the period of this distinguished contest. The coalition of the former with lord North, from whatever motives it took place, was a measure highly obnoxious to national taste, and which lost this celebrated statesman a considerable portion of public confidence. But for this unfortunate circumstance, it was scarcely possible, that he could be deserted by the people, while engaged in an arduous struggle to maintain the privileges of the commons. An union of this description, they conceived, could only be effected by a sacrifice of principle and character; and it produced, therefore, a general opinion altogether unfavorable to Mr. Fox's reputation. Such being the prevailing sentiments of the people on the subject of the coalition; and the public mind being thus prepared to receive every wrong impression; the India bill, opportunely furnished a pretext for this purpose, as plausible as even his great antagonist could wish. The violation of the company's charter, presented a theme for copious and interesting declamation; and of which Mr. Pitt availed himself so successfully, that every paltry corporation, from the Land's End to John of Groat's House, were alarmed for the security of their charters; the whole country was thrown into a ferment; and the collected clamors of a nation directed against the author of the bill. The imagined criminality and turpitude of this measure, absorbed for a time, every other consideration, and prevented any attention being paid to a circumstance, not undeserving of public notice; that Mr. Fox, in supporting the privileges of the commons, against the claims of prerogative, was defending the popular rights of the people in their representative assembly. This reason, while it operated to inflame the public mind against Mr. Fox, rendered at the same time, those blemishes invisible, that sullied the character of Mr. Pitt, in the mode he adopted to preserve himself in power. They forgot, that the first measure of the patriot minister, was a direct attack on the privileges of the house of commons; and that

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that the circumstance of his continuing in office in defiance of their repeated resolutions, might, as a precedent, be productive of consequences, fatal to the future peace and prosperity of a free country. But, if the people overlooked the defects in the minister's public conduct, they were gratefully forward to recognise every favorable quality in his private character. His youth and inexperience were held to be unequivocal proofs of his candor and sincerity. His eloquence in debate was cordially accepted as a pledge for the wisdom of his measures; and the magical name of Pitt proclaimed him the hereditary heir to all the patriot virtues of his illustrious sire. Thus, without experiment, did the people of England give the young minister credit for all the splendid characteristics of a great and good statesman; and thus was he enabled to triumph over a powerful antagonist, who was compelled at last to surrender a fortress which had been defended with a vigor and spirit equalled indeed by few examples. The remuneration the minister has made to the people of this country, for their attachment, favor, and partiality, will be found faithfully registered in the history of his subsequent administration.

LVII. As the general election was, in fact, an appeal to the sense of the nation upon an extraordinary occasion, so the decision of the people was fully and explicitly in favor of the new ministers. The influence of the crown, being evidently combined with the inclination of the country, the effect produced was astonishing. The coalitionists, even those who once stood highest in the estimation of the public, were almost everywhere thrown out: lord John Cavendish for the city, Mr. Foljambe, the heir of sir George Saville, for the county of York; general Conway, for Bury; Mr. Coke, for Norfolk; Mr. Halsey, for Hertfordshire; Mr. Townshend, for Cambridge university; and Mr. Erskine, for Portsmouth. But the most distinguished contest was that of the election for the city of Westminster; where the parties maintained a long and violent struggle, almost as memorable as a battle between contending nations.

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nations. Mr. Fox, however, to the surprise of all, closed the poll with a majority of 235; but the high bailiff, by a scandalous partiality, refused to make the return in his favor, for which an action was afterwards brought by Mr. Fox, in the court of king's bench, and a verdict with large damages obtained.

LVIII. The meeting of parliament took place on the 18th of May; and from this term we may date the commencement of the parliamentary existence of administration. The remainder of the last session may rather be said to have been spent in a contest about places and power, than in the characteristic exertions of a regular government. The new ministers had now completed their arrangements; they had now obtained every advantage of situation; and had leisure to pursue, and strength to carry those measures which were to decide their character as statesmen and legislators. The king in his opening speech expressed "great satisfaction at meeting his parliament at this time, after having recurred in so important a moment to the sense of his people. He entertained a just and confident reliance, that they were animated by the same sentiments of loyalty and attachment to the constitution, which had been so fully manifested in every part of the kingdom. He recommended to their most serious consideration to frame suitable provisions for the good government of our possessions in the East-Indies. Upon this subject, parliament would not lose sight of the effect which the measures they adopted might have on our own constitution and our dearest interests at home." The address of thanks proposed on this occasion, containing strong expressions of approbation respecting the late dissolution, lord Surry, on the ground of unanimity, moved to omit them; but Mr. Pitt declared, "that much as he was convinced of the importance of unanimity, he would not purchase an hollow unanimity, by passing over a great constitutional measure, which the circumstances of the times had made necessary and wise, and which had given the most entire satisfaction to every part of the kingdom."

On

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On this point, therefore, the house divided, and the address, as originally proposed, was carried by a majority of 76 voices; a decisive proof that the dissolution had fully answered its intended purpose.

LIX. The business which chiefly occupied the attention of the house and the public for some time, was the complaint stated by Mr. Fox respecting the conduct of the high-bailiff of Westminster, who had daringly refused to make the return in his favor, although he was evidently entitled to it from a large and decided majority. But while this infamous procedure precluded Mr. Fox from sitting for Westminster, it did not deprive him of a seat in parliament; having, through the interest and friendship of Sir Thomas Dundas, been returned for the Scottish borough of Kirkwall. When this topic was first started in the house, Mr. Pitt seized the opportunity of gratifying his feelings, by a sarcastical description of the circumstances in which his antagonist was placed: he represented Mr. Fox, as a man on whom a sort of sentence of banishment had passed—who had been driven by the efforts of patriotic indignation, as an exile from his native clime, and forced to seek for refuge on the stormy and desolate shores of the Orkneys.

LX. On the 24th of May, a resolution was moved by Mr. Lee, late attorney-general, "That the high-bailiff of Westminster, on the day upon which the writ of election expired, ought to have returned two citizens to serve in parliament for that city." A long and violent debate ensued, but, on the motion of Sir Lloyd Kenyon, the previous question was put and carried, by more than two to one. It was then ordered that the high bailiff and his deputy should attend the house on the day following. The only ground on which that officer rested his defence was, that having by Sir Cecil Wray and his agents been furnished with a regular list of votes, the validity of which he had reason to suspect, he had granted a *scrutiny*, and could not, in *conscience*, make the return till its termination. But to this simple and barefaced plea, a decisive answer presented itself.

He was bound, by the nature of his office and the tenor of his oath, to make his return at the period the writ was returnable, according to the poll *actually* taken. If he really felt any of those scruples of conscience by which he professed to be embarrassed, the law of parliament allowed him to include all the three candidates in the same return; which would at once have transferred the burthen of the decision from his own conscience to the conscience of the house. If such vague presumptions as those advanced by the high bailiff were admitted as just causes of procrastination, elections would be thrown entirely on the mercy of returning officers; who, if gained over by the court, might prevent any person from sitting in parliament, who was obnoxious to the existing administration. This would, indeed, be putting an engine into the hands of ministers, which might be employed to the most oppressive, desperate, and despotic purposes. After long pleadings by counsel at the bar of the house on either part, the motion was renewed, "that the high bailiff be directed forthwith to make the return;" but to the astonishment of every liberal mind in the kingdom, and to the disgrace of the new administration, this motion was vehemently opposed, and on a division finally negatived by a majority of 78. It was then moved by lord Mulgrave, and carried; "That the high bailiff do proceed in the scrutiny with all possible dispatch." Thus ended for the present session, this shameful business, but the character of the minister, in consequence of the active part he took in its progress, suffered an indelible stain. Though as yet young and unhacknied in the ways of men, he was indignantly perceived capable of justifying flagrant injustice, in order to gratify a mean and insidious revenge.

LXV. On the 16th of June, a motion was made by Mr. Alderman Sawbridge, "that a committee be appointed to enquire into the present state of the representation of the commons of Great Britain in parliament." Mr. Pitt, in the usual language of ministers, stated, that the *time* was improper, but observed also, that the measure had
his

his approbation, and he should bring the subject before parliament early next session. Mr. Fox thought, that as the minister could never command a greater majority than at present, this was the proper period to ensure success, and warmly supported the motion. But the most remarkable circumstance attending this debate was, that Mr. Dundas, who had supported the former proposition of Mr. Pitt, had the good luck to escape the charge of inconsistency in opposing the present motion, by the fortunate discovery of a distinction which preserved his reputation. His objection was, that the committee *now* moved for was a select committee, whereas the committee for which he had *formerly* voted, was a committee of the whole house. Lord Mulgrave moved the previous question, which was carried by a majority of 74.

LXII. Mr. Pitt had now reached the summit of popularity, and the public with impatient anxiety expected the production of his plan for the future government of India. Mr. Pitt therefore, introduced this grand business on the 6th of July, by bringing forward a bill, founded on the general principles of that rejected by the former parliament, and to which the company had now given their slow and reluctant assent. By this bill, A BOARD OF CONTROL, composed of a certain number of commissioners of the rank of privy counsellors, was established, the members of which were to be appointed by the king, and removeable at his pleasure. This board was authorised to check, superintend, and control the civil and military government and revenue of the company. The dispatches transmitted by the court of directors to the different presidencies, were to be previously subjected to the inspection of the board, and were also by them to be counter-signed. The directors were enjoined to pay due obedience to the orders of the board, touching civil and military government and revenues; and in case such orders do at any time, in the opinion of the directors, relate to matters not connected with these points, they are empowered to appeal to his majesty in council, whose decision is declared final. The bill also

enacted, that the appointment of the court of directors to the office of governor-general, president, or counsellor to the different presidencies, shall be subject to the approbation and recal of his majesty. As to the Zemindars, or great hereditary land-holders of India, who had been violently dispossessed of their property, and who, agreeably to the generous and decisive tenor of Mr. Fox's bill, were to have been universally and peremptorily re-instituted in their zemindaries, the present bill provided, only that an enquiry should be instituted, in order to restore such as should appear to have been irregularly and unjustly deprived. Lastly, an high tribunal was created, for the trial of Indian delinquents, consisting of three judges, one from each court, of four peers, and six members of the house of commons, who were authorised to judge without appeal; to award, in case of conviction, the punishment of fine and imprisonment, and to declare the party convicted incapable of serving the East India company. Such were the grand and leading features of Mr. Pitt's bill.

LXIII. Mr. Fox, with his usual powers of discrimination, pointed out the defects of the bill. He observed, "that it established a weak and inefficient government, by dividing its powers. To the one board belonged the privilege of ordering and contriving measures; to the other, that of carrying them into execution. It was a system of dark intrigue and delusive art. Theories which did not connect men with measures, were not theories for this world. They were chimeras with which a recluse might divert his fancy, but they were not principles on which a statesman would found his system. By the negative vested in the commissioners, the *Chartered Rights* of the company, on which such stress had been laid, were insidiously undermined and virtually annihilated. If it were right to vest such powers in a board of privy-counsellors, let it be done explicitly and openly, and shew the company and the world that what they dared to do they dared to justify. Founded on principles so heterogeneous, how could such a government

ment be other than the constant victim of internal distraction? The appeal allowed from the decisions of the board of control to the privy council, was only an appeal from the aggressor transformed into the character of a judge, and was therefore in the highest degree nugatory and ridiculous. The bill he had introduced, exhibited at the first blush the features of openness, fairness, and responsibility. The present plan was full of darkness and disguise. In a covert and concealed mode, an immense patronage was transferred to the crown, which already possessing a dangerous and formidable ascendancy over the other branches of the legislature, could not but open a new door to every species of collusion, and in an alarming degree accelerate the progress of corruption.— It was calculated to establish an Indian government of the island of Great Britain. Against the clauses of the bill respecting the zemindars he entered his strongest protest. The zemindars ought, in his opinion, to be rated by a fixed rule of past periods, and not of a vague and indefinite future enquiry. The new tribunal he stigmatized as a screen for delinquents; as a palpable and unconstitutional violation of the sacred right of a trial by jury. Since no man was to be tried but on the accusation of the company, or the attorney-general, he had only to conciliate government in order to his remaining in perfect security. It was a part of the general system of deception and delusion, and he would venture to pronounce it a **BED OF JUSTICE**, where justice would for ever sleep."

LXIV. With all the partiality of the house in favour of Mr. Pitt, this bill was found to be so crude and imperfect on its first appearance, that almost all his own friends objected to one or other of its clauses; and in a variety of subsequent amendments it underwent, it may be said to have lost entirely its original shape; and after all, such were its radical defects, that it required (as will appear in the sequel) a declaratory act to render it intelligible. With respect to the amendments, Mr. Sheridan humorously remarked, "that twenty-one new clauses were

were added to the bill, which were distinguished by the letters of the alphabet, and he requested some gentleman to suggest three more, in order to complete the horn-book of the present ministry. The old clauses were now degraded, and were placed in black letters at the bottom of the page, mourning for the folly of their parents, and the slovenly manner in which the bill was drawn." On the motion of commitment, the numbers were, ayes 276, noes 61; and it was carried in triumph to the house of peers, where, after an opposition vigorous in point of exertion, but feeble in regard of numbers, the bill passed August 9, 1784. It was however accompanied by a protest, in which it was severely branded as a measure ineffectual in its provisions, unjust in its inquisitorial spirit, and unconstitutional in its partial abolition of the trial by jury.

LXV. In the course of pursuing the investigation of Indian affairs, none took a more active and zealous part than Mr. Burke. This gentleman on the 28th of July moved, "That the house should resolve itself into a committee, to enquire into the facts stated in the different reports relative to India." He asserted, "that his character was at stake. If as has been suggested the reports were mere fables, they were indeed calumnies of the most bold and unprincipled nature, and he himself was an infamous calumniator. The two sets of reports, from the different committees acknowledged as their parents Mr. Dundas and himself. The right honorable gentleman, had seen the drawn scymitar lifted up to divide and destroy his offspring, without moving a muscle, or discovering the smallest emotion.—Not so with him—the spectacle was too shocking for his feelings; he could not bear the horrid sight. He wished to receive the bloody and flagitious stroke in his own person; *Adsum qui feci*," exclaimed the orator, "*in me convertite ferrum!*" In sober contempt of this flight of eloquence, Mr. Dundas coolly moved the *order of the day*.

LXVI. Defeated in this attempt, Mr. Burke two days afterwards brought forward a string of motions, intended

tended as a foundation for an enquiry into the conduct of Mr. Hastings. On this Mr. Pitt rose, and asked, "How did that house, as a house of parliament, know as a fact the transactions upon which Mr. Burke grounded his motions? If the motions passed, from what office were the papers expected to proceed? To relieve the house from these embarrassments, he said, he should move the *order of the day*." This second interruption was more than the patience of Mr. Burke could bear. He affirmed "that the insensibility of government to the foul enormities lately perpetrated, and still perpetrating, by our countrymen in the East, was truly shocking. He deprecated the day that the knowledge of them had come to his mind. The miserable objects it exhibited, nations extirpated, provinces desolated, cities and countries overwhelmed in one mass of destruction, constantly dwelt on his imagination. The cries of the native Indians were never out of his ears, an impression of horror had seized on his mind which deprived him of sleep, and night and day preyed upon his peace. The reality of the facts stated in the reports had been impeached. Why then would not the men who denied them, stand forward and support their allegations?" "Oh! what," said this impassioned orator, "would I not give to find the scenes of horror there described nothing more than a fiction! To me it would be a discovery more precious and grateful than the discovery of a new world." He declared, that he wished it for the honor of humanity, from sympathy to millions of suffering and helpless individuals, from an anxious desire to retrieve the honor of the house, and of the country at large, from infamy and execration. He conjured Mr. Pitt to reflect with seriousness on this business. The voice of India cried aloud for justice. He was at a loss, he said, how to account for the callous insensibility of a minister, at a time of life when all the generous feelings of our nature are most lively and susceptible; and proceeding to indulge his unruly temper in personal reflections, he was called to order, but he still persevered in furious exclamations and reproaches, till he was

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was compelled to sit down by the universal clamor and tumult of the house.

LXVII. On the dismissal of this unwelcome business, the attention of the house was immediately transferred to a bill introduced by the minister, for the more effectual prevention of smuggling, which had of late years arisen to a most alarming height. This bill contained various prudential, but somewhat severe regulations. The distance from shore at which seizures should in future be deemed lawful was extended, and the constructing of vessels of a certain form and dimension peculiarly calculated for smuggling prohibited. But by far the most extraordinary part of the present plan was the reduction of the duties paid by the East-India company on the importation of TEA, which was declared to be the grand medium of the smuggling traffic; and the consequent imposition of a new duty on windows, already most grievously burthened, to the amount of the deficiency, stated at no less than six hundred thousand pounds per annum. This was styled by the minister a commutation tax, and the equity of it was defended on the simple and vague idea, that teas being an article of universal consumption, the weight of the tax would be compensated by a proportional abatement in the purchase of the commodity. Nothing however could be more fallacious than this statement. It is obvious that in large towns, ground for the purpose of building being very valuable, houses are erected on a comparatively confined scale, and the number of windows is very moderate. But in small towns and villages, where ground is cheap, houses are for the most part constructed on a more extensive model, with ranges of offices and windows commanding the court-yards, gardens, &c. adjoining to the dwelling. On these rural retreats the tax fell heavily indeed; and the miserable effects are very visible in the multitude of windows stopped up in farm-houses, and other country residences, to the great injury of the ease, health, and comfort of a large proportion of the community.

LXVIII. A vigorous but unavailing opposition was made

made to the bill by Mr. Fox—He asked, “what connection there was between an impost upon tea, and an impost upon windows, to entitle the latter to be denominated a commutation for the former? He affirmed it to be the essence of financial injustice and oppression to take off a tax upon luxury, and substitute in its stead a tax upon that which was of indispensable necessity. Spirits were a leading article of smuggling, and a luxury in common use, as well as tea. But would the minister venture to pursue the commuting principle of this bill to its full extent, and abolishing the duties on spirituous liquors, to impose another upon windows, and assign as a reason, that all men may be presumed to drink rum or brandy in their own houses? The obligations of this kingdom to the East-India company, and the vast revenue we derived from the commerce they carried on, had been much insisted on; but surely it was at all times easy, without having recourse to their instrumentality, to obtain the same revenue by the same means.” The bill at length passed the house by a great majority.

LXIX. The remaining great operation of finance during this session, was the providing for the arrears of the unfunded debt left at the conclusion of the war, amounting to more than twenty millions. This was disposed of partly in the four per cents, and partly in a new created five per cent. stock, made irredeemable for thirty years, or until twenty-five millions of the existing funds should be extinguished. It must not be omitted, that the sum of sixty thousand pounds, was voted to his majesty, to enable him to discharge the debt contracted on the civil list. This was the fourth grant for the same purpose since his accession. A warm altercation took place as to the precise period when this debt was incurred. All however that the public could be fully certified of was, that with the civil-list revenue of eight hundred thousand pounds, afterwards increased to nine hundred thousand pounds per annum, exclusive of the revenues arising from the crown lands, more than fourteen hundred thousand pounds had been voted within the space of about fifteen years, for

for the payment of the debts of the crown. The stern observation of the great Milton could not but forcibly recur at this time to the public recollection—"That the very trappings of a monarchy were more than sufficient to defray the whole expence of a republic."

LXX. The last measure which came before parliament during the present session, was a bill introduced by Mr. Dundas for the restoration of the estates forfeited in Scotland in consequence of the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Mr. Dundas declared "the measure to be, in his opinion, worthy of the justice and generosity of parliament. He said there was not one of the families comprehended in the scope of it, in which some person had not atoned for the crimes and errors of his ancestors, by sacrificing his blood in the cause of his country; and that the sovereign had not for a long series of years past a more loyal set of subjects than the highlanders and their chieftains. Of this the late lord Chatham was deeply sensible, and that illustrious statesman had publicly recognised the rectitude of the measure now proposed. And he trusted that the remains of a system, which, whether directed at first by narrow views or sound policy, ought certainly to be temporary, would be completely annihilated under the administration of his son. He did not however mean, that the estates should be freed from the claims existing against them at the time of forfeiture. This might be regarded as a premium for rebellion. He therefore proposed the appropriation of such sums, amounting to about eighty thousand pounds, to public purposes; fifty thousand of which he would recommend to be employed in the completion of the grand canal reaching from the Frith of Forth to that of Clyde."

LXXI. This liberal measure was received in a manner that did honor to the feelings of the house. Mr. Fox, in particular, with his usual generosity, bestowed upon it the highest encomiums. Nevertheless when the bill was sent to the lords, it met with a most determined and malignant resistance from the lord chancellor, who expatiated with much satisfaction on that maxim of ancient wisdom,

wisdom, which pronounced treason to be a crime of so deep a dye, that nothing less was adequate to its punishment, than the total eradication of the person, the name, and the family out of the community. Fortunately on dividing the house, this nobleman was left in a disgraceful minority, and to the entire satisfaction of the public the bill passed.

LXXII. An end was put to the session August 20, 1784, the king returning his warmest thanks to the two houses, for their zealous and diligent attention to the public service. He predicted the happiest effects from the bill for the better government of India. He spoke in terms of the highest approbation of the laws enacted for the improvement of the revenue. He thanked his faithful commons for their provision for the arrears of the civil list; deploring at the same time, in the usual style, the *unavoidable burthens* imposed upon his people. He noticed the definitive treaty with Holland, and the peace concluded in India; and trusted, from the assurances of foreign powers, that the present tranquillity would prove of permanent duration.

CHAP. II.

I. *Introductory Remarks on the Tranquillity enjoyed by the Nation.* II. *Meeting of Parliament.—The Subject of the Westminster Scrutiny resumed by the Commons.* III. *Remarks on Mr. Pitt's Defence of the Scrutiny by Mr. Fox.* IV. *The Scrutiny unexpectedly and abruptly terminated.* V. *The business of a Parliamentary Reform introduced by Mr Pitt.* VI. *Its Character and Tendency described.* VII. *The Measure violently opposed—and lost.* VIII. *The Shop Tax—the Hawkers and Pedlars Tax—both of which unjust and oppressive.* IX. *The Irish Propositions introduced by Mr. Pitt.* X. *Mr. Fox's Opinion of the System.* XI. *Petitions against the Measure—Mr. Pitt obliged to alter his original Plan.* XII. *A series of Propositions altered and enlarged introduced by Mr. Pitt—passed the Commons—carried to the Lords.* XIII. *Amended by the Lords—returned to the Commons—finally passed.—Prorogation of Parliament.* XIV. *Reflections on the System of*

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Commercial Intercourse held out by the Irish Propositions.
 XV. Meeting of Parliament. XVI. The Plan of Fortifications suggested by the Duke of Richmond submitted to the House of Commons. XVII. Ably opposed by Mr. Sheridan. XVIII. Lost by the Speaker's casting Vote. XIX. Mr. Pitt's Proposal of a Sinking Fund for the Liquidation of the National Debt. XX. An Amendment suggested by Mr. Fox—adopted by Mr. Pitt.—Bill passed. XXI. The Civil List in Arrears—discharged by the Commons. XXII. Mr. Burke commences his Charges against Warren Hastings—the Difficulties he had to encounter in this Business, stated. XXIII. Mr. Hastings delivers his Defence at the Bar of the Commons—Prorogation of Parliament. XXIV. An Attempt to assassinate the King by Margaret Nicholson. XXV. Treaty of Commerce with France signed. XXVI. A Convention signed with Spain respecting the British Settlements on the Mosquito Shore, and the Coast of Honduras. XXVII. Meeting of Parliament—Consideration of the French Commercial Treaty. XXVIII. Violently opposed—finally passed. XXIX. Embarrassed Situation of the Prince of Wales. XXX. A Circumstance of peculiar Delicacy rumored relative to his Royal Highness—its supposed Effects on the King. XXXI. Alderman Newnham gives Notice to the House of a Motion on the Subject of the Prince of Wales's Debts. XXXII. Mr. Newnham's intended Motion withdrawn, and the Prince's Debts discharged by parliamentary Grant. XXXIII. The Subject of Mr. Hastings's Impeachment resumed by the Commons—Charge respecting the Begum Princess of Oude affirmed. XXXIV. The remaining Charges affirmed. XXXV. Mr. Hastings impeached at the Bar of the Lords. XXXVI. Parliament prorogued. XXXVII. The interference of the Courts of London and Berlin in the Affairs of Holland—subsidiary Treaty with Hesse. XXXVIII. Meeting of Parliament. XXXIX. Remarks on the King's Speech. XL. Treaties of Amity and Alliance concluded between the Courts of London, Berlin and the Hague. XLI. The East-India Declaratory Act—vigorously opposed—finally passed. XLII. The commencement of Mr. Hastings's Trial in Westminster-Hall. XLIII.

XLIII. *A Bill to regulate the Transportation of Slaves from Africa to the West Indies introduced and passed.*

XLIV. *Prorogation of Parliament.* XLV. *The King goes to Cheltenham—his Return—his Indisposition—the two Houses meet—Disputes on the Mode of establishing a Regency.* XLVI. *Mr. Pitt appears the Advocate of popular Rights—Mr. Fox the Defender of Prerogative.* XLVII.

The Subject of the Regency debated in the House of Lords.

XLVIII. *Resolutions declaratory of the Right of Parliament to supply the Defect occasioned by the Interruption of the royal Authority—pass the Commons.* XLIX. *Another Resolution passed, empowering the Chancellor to affix the Great Seal to a Bill for limiting the Power of the Regent.* L. *The Death of Mr. Cornwall Speaker of the House of Commons.*

LI. *Mr. Pitt writes to the Prince of Wales on the Subject of the Regency—the Prince's Answer.* LII. *Notification of the King's Recovery.* LIII. *Parliament regularly opened.*

LIV. *The Shop Tax repealed.* LV. *A Motion for the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.* LVI. *The Abolition of the African Slave Trade moved by Mr. Wilberforce.* LVII. *The Prorogation of Parliament.*

I. **T**HE short interval between the prorogation of parliament and its re-assembly, proved a period of profound national tranquillity, in which no event occurred of sufficient importance to demand particular attention. The people of England, highly gratified with the recent change which had taken place, seemed to repose with unbounded confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the present administration. The young premier had indeed become the idol of the public, and the most sanguine hopes were indulged, that under his auspices, Britain would soon resume her rank and dignity among the nations, and rise to a state of prosperity and splendor superior to the brightest æra of her former greatness.

1785. II. Such appeared to be the temper of the public mind, and such the flattering hopes of the nation, when the parliament of Great Britain assembled for its second session on the twenty-fifth of January 1785. The measure on this occasion, chiefly recommended in the speech

from the throne, was the adjustment of such points in the commercial intercourse between this country and Ireland, as were not yet finally arranged. The address of thanks being carried unanimously, the first business which engaged the attention of the house of commons, was the state of the Westminster scrutiny; and such was the violent and malignant spirit with which its continuance was defended, that this wretched burlesque on English jurisprudence was at last dignified by the appellation of the COURT OF SCRUTINY. This court had now existed for a period of eight months, and only two parishes out of seventeen had been scrutinized; so that there remained no probability, by this mode of procedure, of deciding the question of return during the existence of the present parliament. The high bailiff had no power to summon witnesses, to impose an oath, or to commit for contempt; and in consequence of this miserable imbecility, both court and counsel were exposed to the low and sarcastic buffoonery of the common vulgar.

III. Mr. Pitt, however, to the utter astonishment of the public, condescended to vindicate the proceedings of this judicature, and the meanness and malignity of the attempt led Mr. Fox with honest and indignant warmth to remark, "that he well remembered the day when he congratulated the house on the acquisition of Mr. Pitt's splendid abilities: it had been his pride to fight in conjunction with him the battles of the constitution: he had been ever ready to recognize in the right honorable gentleman a formidable rival, who would leave him far behind in the pursuit of glory: but he had never expected that this rival would become his persecutor. He thought he had possessed an elevation of mind wholly incompatible with so low and grovelling a passion. He considered the present measure with regard to Westminster, as a *succedaneum* to expulsion. The case of the Middlesex election, so much reprobated, had at least the merit of being more manly; for the procedure now adopted accomplished the same end of expulsion, without daring to exhibit any charge against the person expelled."

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IV. The motion of Mr. Welbore Ellis, "that the high bailiff do attend at the bar of this house, was at length negatived, February 9th. by 174, to 135 voices. This being but a slender majority, the motion of Mr. Ellis was renewed by colonel Fitzpatric and rejected by a majority of only nine: and was finally repeated by Mr. Alderman Sawbridge on the third of March, and carried in the affirmative, ayes 162, noes 124. Thus did the house, by a decision truly honorable to themselves, and highly satisfactory to the nation, leave the minister, and the veteran phalanx of courtiers and king's friends, in one of the most disgraceful minorities ever known in the British house of commons: and thus abruptly terminated this *scandalous scrutiny*, and the high bailiff next day made a return of lord Hood and Mr. Fox.

V. As the late proceedings in parliament on the business of the scrutiny were viewed even by the minister's friends with inexpressible regret and astonishment, it was fortunate for Mr. Pitt that the public attention was quickly transferred to a subject of high national importance, namely reform in the commons house of parliament. In supporting this measure, which of all others has long been deemed by the wisest and best of men, the most essential to the true honor and lasting interests of Britain, he discovered a conduct more worthy of his talents, station, and character, and which tended to revive all the former flattering prepossessions in his favor. On this occasion, all those puerile resentments, the offspring of the meaner passions, were extinguished, and he shone forth at once the patriot and statesman.

VI. The plan of reform was brought forward by Mr. Pitt on the 18th of April, and in his introductory speech, "He rose," he said "with hopes infinitely more sanguine than he had ventured to entertain at any former period. There never was a moment when the minds of men were more enlightened on this interesting topic, or more prepared for its discussion. He declared

his present plan of reform to be perfectly coincident with the spirit of those changes which had taken place in the exercise of the elective franchise from the earliest ages, and not in the least allied to the spirit of innovation. So far back as the reign of Edward the first, before which the component orders of the representative body could not be distinctly traced, the franchise of election had been constantly fluctuating. As one borough decayed and another flourished, the first was abolished and the second invested with the right. Even the representation of the counties had not been uniform. King James the first in his first proclamation for calling a parliament, directed that the sheriffs should not call upon such boroughs as were decayed and ruined to send members to parliament. For this discretion, as vested in the crown, he was certainly no advocate; but he wished to establish a permanent rule to operate like the discretion out of which the constitution had sprung. He wished," he said, "to bring forward a plan that should be complete, gradual, and permanent; a plan that not only corrected the inequalities of the present system, but which would be competent to preserve the purity it restored, and give to the constitution not only consistency, but if possible immortality. It was his design that the actual number of the house of commons should be preserved inviolate. His immediate object was to select a certain number of the decayed and rotten boroughs, the right of representation attached to thirty-six of which, should be transferred to the counties, in such proportions as the wisdom of parliament might prescribe; and that all unnecessary harshness might be avoided, he recommended the appropriation of a fund of one million to be applied to the purchasing the franchise of such boroughs, on their voluntary application to parliament. When this was effected, he proposed to extend the bill to the purchasing the franchise of other boroughs, besides the original thirty-six; and to transfer the right of returning members to large towns, hitherto unrepresented, upon their petitioning parliament to be indulged with this privilege."

lege." The other most important particulars of Mr. Pitt's plan, were the admitting of copy-holders to an equality with free-holders, and the extending the franchise in populous towns, where the electors were few, to the inhabitants in general. The result of the minister's plan was to give one hundred members to the popular interest in the kingdom; and to extend the right of election to one hundred thousand persons, who, by the existing provisions of the law, were excluded from the privilege.

VII. This plan, which was admitted on all hands to be cautious, temperate, and well digested, was nevertheless destined to encounter the raillery and ridicule of an opposition truly formidable in point of numbers. Mr. Powys in particular treated the whole scheme as "the mere knight errantry of a political Quixote. It was an example, a precedent, an incitement, to the wildest and most paradoxical *nostrum* that speculative theorists could devise. They got by it what Archimedes wanted—a foundation for their inventions—a *fulcrum* from which they could throw the parliament and constitution of England into the air. He could not contemplate it with any degree of patience. He should not treat it therefore with the ceremony of calling for the order of the day, but as its purposes were so hostile to the constitution, he would meet the question in front by giving it a direct and unequivocal contradiction." It certainly cannot with any decent regard to truth be attributed to the irresistible force of such *arguments* as these that the bill was rejected by a majority of 248 to 174 voices.

VIII. On the 9th of May, the chancellor of the exchequer proposed that the remaining part of the floating arrear of debt, consisting of navy bills and ordnance debentures, should be funded on five per cent. stock; and the interest amounting to above four hundred thousand pounds per annum provided by fresh taxes. Among the taxes brought forward on this occasion, was one on retail shops, which proved singularly obnoxious. As this

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tax was proportioned to the rent of the house, it was inevitably destined to fall, almost exclusively, upon the inhabitants of the metropolis. It was therefore with great justice denominated neither more nor less than a partial house tax; and the whole body of retail traders were universally agreed, that it was utterly impracticable to indemnify themselves, by raising the price of their different commodities upon the consumer. Struck with the force of these and other arguments, and conscious of the extreme unpopularity of the measure, Mr. Pitt by way of recompence to the shop-keeper, proposed by a deed of unprecedented oppression, to revoke and take away the licence from all *hawkers and pedlars*, whom he styled "a pest to the community, and a nursery and medium for the preservation of illicit trade." The cause of this humble, useful, and unprotected description of men was generally and powerfully supported by Mr. Fox, Mr. Courtney, and other gentlemen. Indeed such was the shocking inhumanity and utter indefensibility of the proposed regulation, that Mr. Dempster, in the course of the debate, truly affirmed the principle of the bill to be no less iniquitous than that of the expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain, or of the Huguenots from France. In the result, the prohibition was changed to a very heavy duty, which together with a number of severe restrictions would, it was expected, effect the same ultimate purpose.

IX. But the subject which of all others chiefly engaged the attention of parliament during the present session, was the projected plan of commercial intercourse with Ireland. This new system was first introduced into the parliament of Ireland on the seventh of February, by Mr. Orde, secretary to the lord lieutenant, in the form of ten propositions; but by a slight alteration, and a distribution of the subject of one of them into two heads, they were at last increased to eleven. In this state they received the final assent of the parliament of Ireland, on the sixteenth of February. On the twenty second of the same month Mr. Pitt brought the subject before the

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British house of commons; and in the opening of this important business, he observed "that the species of policy which had been long exercised by the English government in regard to Ireland, was calculated to debar her from the enjoyment and use of her own resources, and to make her completely subservient to the interest and opulency of this country. Some relaxation of this system had taken place at an early period of the present century;—more had been done in the reign of king George the second; but it was not till within a very few years that the system had been completely reversed. Still however the future intercourse between the two kingdoms remained for legislative wisdom to arrange; and the propositions moved by Mr. Orde in the Irish parliament, and ratified by that assembly, held out a system liberal, beneficial and permanent. If the question should be asked, whether, under the accumulation of our heavy taxes, it would be wise to equalize the duties, and to enable a country free from those taxes to meet us in their own market and in ours, he would answer, that Ireland, with an independent legislature, would no longer submit to be treated with inferiority. A great and generous effort was to be made by this country, and we were to choose between inevitable alternatives. Our manufactures however were so decidedly superior to theirs, that the immunities proposed would be in fact, and for many years to come, productive of little alteration. It would require time for the acquisition of both capital and skill; and as these increased, the difference between the price of labour there and in this country, would be incessantly diminishing. After all, there might, he admitted, be some branches of manufacture in which Ireland might rival and perhaps excel England. But this ought not to give us pain. We must calculate from general and not from partial views. Above all, we should learn not to regard Ireland with an eye of jealousy. It required little philosophy to reconcile us to a competition, which would give us a rich customer instead of a poor one. The property of the
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sister kingdom would be a fresh and inexhaustible source of opulence to us."

X. The immense magnitude of the plan—the multiplicity and complexity of the objects it embraced, seemed to keep the public mind in a kind of suspense, and for near a month after its first introduction, there were no indications discernible of serious or determined opposition. Mr. Fox, indeed, when the subject was first started, commenced the attack by observing, "that by far the greater part of Mr. Pitt's speech was little else than a reply to that of Mr. Orde in the Irish house of commons. In Ireland, the propositions had been stated as in the highest degree advantageous to that country; as rendering it the emporium of Europe, and the source and supply of the British markets. Here the great recommendation of the system was, that the benefits accruing to Ireland were, if not wholly visionary, at best trivial and remote. We are told," said Mr. Fox, "that Ireland cannot rival England; that she is poor and feeble, and would very long in all probability remain so. He must, however, do Mr. Orde the justice to acknowledge, that he had defended the propositions, and argued upon them infinitely better than the British minister." As to the report of the privy council, to whom the consideration of this business had been previously referred, Mr. Fox remarked that they had entirely overlooked a question which appeared to him of primary importance; he meant the propriety and policy of permitting the produce of Africa and America to be brought into great Britain through Ireland. By this means we threw down the whole fabric of our navigation laws; even with regard to the great article of tea, the period was not very distant, when the charter of the East India company would expire; and according to the tenor of the resolutions now proposed, there certainly remained no power in this country to renew it with the same, or indeed any exclusive privileges. Mr. Fox severely censured the precipitancy with which this business was urged: he asserted, that not only the manufactures, but the reve-

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nues and political existence of Britain were involved in the discussion; and he contended for the necessity of calling the merchants and manufacturers to the bar of the house, in order that the house might be fully informed in a case of this momentous nature, before they proceeded to vote a definitive resolution.

XI. About the middle of March, the spirit of commercial jealousy appeared to be thoroughly awakened. The petitions presented against the measure amounted in the whole to upwards of sixty. They were sent up to parliament from every quarter of the kingdom, and there was scarcely a single species of manufacture or merchandise upon the subject of which, the persons peculiarly interested, had not conceived considerable alarm. From the sixteenth of March to the twelfth of May, the house of commons were almost incessantly employed in the hearing of counsel, and the examination of witnesses. In consequence of this long and able investigation, many additional lights were thrown upon the subject; and Mr. Pitt was at last reluctantly compelled to acknowledge the necessity of making some material alterations and amendments in his original plan.

XII. Accordingly, on the 12th of May, the minister brought forward a series of propositions, so altered, modified, and enlarged, as to exhibit in their improved form, what might well be considered as a new system. On this occasion, Mr. Fox, in the language of triumph, congratulated the house on the happy escape they had made from the system proposed by the chancellor of the exchequer but two months since; all opposition to which, was then treated as the effect of faction and disappointment. "It," said Mr. Fox, "the original resolutions had passed, we should have lost for ever the monopoly of the East-India trade; we must have hazarded all the revenue arising from spirituous liquors; we should have sacrificed the whole of the navigation laws of this country. The just alarm of the minister on the subject of the navigation laws, sufficiently appeared from the extraordinary remedy he had thought it expedient to adopt, which was

was no other than to assert, that, notwithstanding the independence of Ireland, she must still in commercial laws and external legislation be governed by Britain." Mr. Fox affirmed, "that the wild scheme of extravagant speculation comprized in the resolutions, did not originate with the Irish nation. A stranger had been sent thither to offer a *nostrum* of his own invention for the relief of a disordered state. For the irritation and ill humour existing in that country, ministers were responsible. The violences which they committed in Ireland, merited the most decisive and general reprobation. Their attacks on the liberty of the press;—their endeavours to prevent legal meetings, for the purpose of deliberating on the best means of reforming the national representation;—their proceedings against men by summary attachment, were measures which might well be supposed to inflame the minds of the people of Ireland. Now imprudent insult was to be compensated by imprudent concession. But let the house beware of a design so insidious and ruinous, as that of a commutation of English commerce for Irish slavery. The propositions, as they were even now modified, were far too complicated and extensive to be voted by a majority of that house, on any other ground than that of confidence in the minister: and surely the right honorable gentleman had sufficiently demonstrated, that implicit confidence in him was as dangerous as it was absurd; that infallibility was no more his prerogative than that of the rest of the world. The minister who exacted, and the member who submitted to so disgraceful an obedience, were equally criminal. The man, who holding the first seat in his majesty's councils, could stoop to so shameful a canvass, must be lost to all sense of dignity, of character, and manly patriotism; and he who acquiesced in the measure from any other inducement than that of sincere conviction, surrendered every claim to honest estimation, and sunk into the mean-ness and degradation of a mere ministerial instrument, unworthy the situation of a senator and the name of an Englishman." The house at length divided on the motion

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tion of adjournment, ayes 155, noes 281; and at eight o'clock in the morning the first resolution, broken into two distinct propositions in the new arrangement, passed the house. The remaining resolutions were subsequently carried, after a most obstinate and violent contest, and on the thirtieth of May were sent up to the house of lords.

XIII. Here they were again the subject of long and laborious investigation; in the course of which, various amendments were offered and received by the house. At last, on the nineteenth of July, the resolutions in their altered state were sent down from the lords to the commons; where, after much fresh and eager debate, the amendments of their lordships were agreed to by the commons; and on the twenty-eight of July, an address was presented to the king by both houses of parliament, acquainting his majesty with the steps which had been taken in this important affair; adding, "that it remained for the parliament of Ireland to judge of the conditions according to their wisdom and discretion, as well as of every other part of the settlement proposed to be established by mutual consent." The two houses now adjourned themselves to a distant day, and on the thirtieth of September 1785, the parliament was prorogued by royal proclamation.

XIV. If the original propositions adopted by the Irish legislature were rejected with indignation by the British parliament, the English series of propositions proved still more obnoxious to the general spirit of the Irish nation. A number of pressing circumstances, however, in the relative situation of the two kingdoms, rendered some such experiment at this time absolutely necessary. It was a fact completely ascertained, that the free trade gained to Ireland had not been productive of those advantages which its sanguine friends had so often predicted. To establish a prosperous foreign trade, it is necessary that the foundation of success should be laid at home, in the extent of capital, and the excellence of manufactures, and with respect to these essential advantages, England had gained a decided superiority in the scale of

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competition. Destitute of capital, and comparatively deficient in skill, Ireland could not expect, at least for many years, to support a successful rivalry with England in foreign trade. In such a contest, it was the infant struggling with Hercules. In addition to the striking inequality in commercial advantages, the vast importation of foreign articles into Ireland deprived her of a great portion of the benefits resulting from home consumption, and reduced her manufacturers to a state not of poverty only, but of real distress and wretchedness. Many thousands of this useful class were thrown entirely out of employment, and, but for the liberal subscriptions of an association formed for their relief, must, together with their families, have perished with cold and hunger. The discontents of the people of Ireland, in consequence of this general distress, were not expressed in silent murmurs, or peaceful complaint, but broke out into all the violence of tumultuous riot, spread terror and confusion over the whole country, and convulsed the capital itself. Indeed, the shocking number of robberies, murders, and assassinations, perpetrated at this time, in almost every quarter of the kingdom, seemed to indicate the temper of a people roused to frenzy, and goaded to desperation. In this state of alarm, turbulence, and anarchy, the general voice of the people of Ireland called aloud for protecting duties, that should bear heavy on the productions of other countries, as the only remedy commensurate to the extent of the national distress. This plan would indeed, in its operation, infallibly compel the inhabitants of Ireland to consume the produce of native ingenuity and industry; but as it would, at the same time, deprive England of the advantages of the Irish market, it could not be expected to prove highly acceptable to this country. To promote, therefore, the mutual interest of England and Ireland, to regulate the commercial intercourse between both countries on equal principles, were the objects the original propositions professed to have in view; and the philanthropist will certainly lament, that a scheme of so liberal

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liberal and generous an aspect, should be defeated by the malign spirit of mercantile jealousy. Commerce is naturally full of suspicion and mistrust; it takes in every object with the eye of insatiable avarice. It grasps every species of commodity with a selfish and monopolizing hand. This characteristic disposition so fully displayed itself, while the propositions were pending in the British parliament, that almost every individual, in any shape interested in trade, seemed to consider the success of that measure, and his own ruin, as ultimately and inseparably connected. The sister kingdom, however, it must be confessed, in the rejection of the plan transmitted from England, was actuated by higher and nobler motives. Ireland, by a long series of virtuous and patriotic struggles, had at last established the independence of her legislature; and finding that the fourth proposition struck at that independence, the parliament, jealous of their infant liberty, and almost without glancing at the commercial features of the proffered system, peremptorily rejected the whole on that ground, with just and manly indignation. Public illuminations in the populous towns of Ireland testified the general joy excited by the sudden termination of a business which was originally intended to communicate both to England and Ireland, solid and lasting advantages; but, from the issue, appears to have been destined by a singular fate to rouse commercial jealousies, to awaken national prejudices, to provoke, where it was intended to conciliate, to inflame resentment where it was expected to challenge gratitude, and to disturb the public tranquillity of both kingdoms more, perhaps, than any preceding measure of the present reign.

1786. XV. After a tranquil interval of a few months, the parliament of Great Britain met on the twenty-fourth of January, 1786. In the speech from the throne, the king declared to the house of commons, his earnest wish to enforce œconomy in every department; recommending to them the maintenance of our naval strength on the most respectable footing; and above all, the establish-

ment of a fixed plan for the reduction of the national debt. Nothing very material occurred until near the middle of February, when a subject of the highest consequence attracted the attention of both parliament, and the public: this was the plan of fortifications, originally suggested by the duke of Richmond. As a matter of revenue, it had been the design to vote for this purpose, fifty thousand pounds per annum, till the whole should be completed, or should be brought into a condition of considerable forwardness. But this design was interrupted last session, in consequence of a suggestion of colonel Barre, "that a board of land and sea officers ought to be appointed to examine the merits of the system." This idea having been pretty generally adopted by the house, Mr. Pitt not only agreed, that no money should be then voted for the purpose, but also that the sum of fifty thousand pounds, granted in the year 1784, for that service, and not yet expended, should be reserved till the matter had undergone a complete investigation. In conformity with this agreement, a board of officers was appointed on the thirteenth of April, 1785, and on the twenty-fourth of June following, made their report to the king.

XVI. This business was again brought before parliament, in the present session, on the tenth of February, when Mr. Pitt stated the report of the board of land and sea officers, to be in the highest degree favorable to the plan of fortification, submitted to their decision, but the report itself he declined laying before the house, as a matter of too serious and delicate a nature for public inspection. The discontent manifested when the question was last year under discussion, now rose into the warmth of indignation. "If the report, or the essentials it contained, were not to be in some mode subject to the inspection of the house, they were, it was affirmed, in exactly the same situation in which they had stood before the board was appointed. They must decide, not upon their own judgments, but in deference to the authority of the minister. But the house of commons were not justified

justified in voting away the money of their constituents upon the grounds of passive complaisance, and courtly submission. The expence attending this novel system would be enormous, and it was at least their duty before they adopted it, to be fully convinced of its necessity." General Burgoyne, who was one of the board, controverted the assertion of Mr. Pitt respecting the entire approbation expressed by them of the system in question.— "It was well known," he said, "that cases hypothetically put, admitted only of a direct answer given under the admission of the hypothesis. It remained to be ascertained, whether the case thus hypothetically put, was sufficiently within the limits of probability to deserve attention. Several of the cases on which the board were called upon to decide were mere *postulata*, and hypothetically as extravagant as if it were asked: suppose by some convulsion of nature the straits of Dover should vanish out of existence, and the coasts of England and France were to unite, would it not be expedient to fortify the isthmus between the two countries? The question relative to the fortifications was beyond the reach of party. It was, in his mind, the most important and the most interesting, whether considered as a question of science, of revenue, or of constitution, that was ever submitted to the decision of parliament."

XVII. Mr. Pitt waved the farther discussion of the question at present, but declared his intention of bringing it again before the house in a short time, in the most specific and solemn manner. Accordingly, in about a fortnight after, he moved the following resolution; "That it appears to the house, that to provide effectually for securing the dockyards of Portsmouth and Plymouth by a permanent system of fortification, was an essential object for the safety of the state, &c. &c." On this occasion a violent debate arose, in the course of which, Mr. Sheridan eminently distinguished himself as an enemy to the measure. "When we talked of a constitutional jealousy of the military power of the crown, what was the real object," he asked, "to which we pointed our
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suspicion? What, but that it was in the nature of kings to love power, and in the constitution of armies to obey kings. This doubtless was plain speaking upon a delicate subject, but the nature of the question demanded it. In this point of view, would no stress be laid on the great and important distinction, to be drawn, between troops elected and separated from their fellow citizens in garrisons and forts, and men living scattered and entangled in all the common duties and connections of their countrymen? The fact was, that these strong military holds, if maintained as they must be in peace, by full and disciplined garrisons would in truth, promise ten fold the means of curbing and subduing the country, than could arise even from doubling the present army establishment, with this extraordinary aggravation, that those very naval stores and magazines, the seeds and sources of future navies, the effectual preservation of which was the pretence for these unassailable fortresses, would, in that case, become a pledge and hostage in the hands of the crown: a circumstance which, in a country like this, must insure unconditional submission to the most extravagant claims that despotism could dictate. Could any one possibly imagine that the system now recommended was to end with Portsmouth and Plymouth, and that the reasonings of the minister would not apply to other parts of the kingdom? No—we were to figure to ourselves the same board of officers, acting under the same instructions, and deliberating with the same *data*, going a circuit round the coasts of the kingdom. It was not possible for the house to remain at a loss to discover various places besides Chatham and Sheerness where extensive lines had actually been begun, under the auspices of the duke of Richmond, which must necessarily be provided for according to the new system. He wished to see the estimate for the stationary defence of such places, in addition to the two and twenty thousand men demanded for Portsmouth and Plymouth. If, however, the professional abilities of the duke of Richmond were ill employed in the fabrication of so wild a project; it must be acknowledged

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ledged that they appeared to advantage in the planning and constructing the report in question. There were certain detached *data*, like advanced works, to keep the enemy at a distance from the main object in debate. Strong provisions covered the flanks of his assertions.—His very queries were in casemates. No impression, therefore, was to be made on this fortress of sophistry by desultory observations, and it was necessary to assail it by regular approaches. Much ingenuity likewise had been shewn in extracting such parts of the report as were deemed most favorable to the proposed system. The minutes which contained the opinion of the naval officers, in condemnation of the plan, were wholly omitted, because they were mixed with matter of such dangerous import, that no chymical process known in the ordnance laboratory could possibly separate them; while, on the contrary, every approving opinion, like a light, oily fluid, floated at the top, and was capable of being presented to the house, pure and untinged by a single particle of the argument and information upon which it was founded.”

XVIII. It was thought by many to be impossible that a man of Mr. Pitt's discernment could be the sincere and cordial advocate of so preposterous a scheme; and it was even mentioned in the house, by one of his friends, as a topic of report, that in this business he was suspected of acting against his own opinion: but, however this may be, certain it is, that he found himself on this occasion very generally deserted by the country gentlemen; and the division was rendered memorable by an exact equality of numbers, both the ayes and the noes amounting to 169. The speaker, being of course compelled to give his casting vote, acquired much applause, by declaring for the rejection of this chimerical, extravagant, and dangerous system.

XIX. The subject which the minister seemed to intend should make the principal figure in this session of parliament, was the proposal of a sinking fund for the liquidation of the national debt. On the 7th of March,
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Mr. Pitt moved for the appointment, by ballot, of a select committee of nine persons, to report to the house the state of the public revenue and expenditure. The result of their enquiry was laid before the house on the twenty-first of the same month; and proved in the highest degree pleasing and satisfactory. The amount of the revenue for the current year was estimated by the committee, at fifteen millions, three hundred and ninety-seven thousand pounds. The permanent expenditure, including the civil list, and the interests payable on the different funds, amounted to ten millions five hundred and fifty-four thousand pounds. The peace establishment, allowing eighteen thousand men for the navy, and the usual complement of seventy regiments for the army, exclusive of life-guards and cavalry, was estimated at three millions nine hundred and twenty-four thousand pounds. In all, fourteen millions four hundred and seventy-eight thousand pounds; of consequence there remained a surplus of more than nine hundred thousand pounds. Mr. Pitt observed upon this report, "that though this was stated to be the annual expenditure, a considerable interval must elapse before this reduction could take place; this term he fixed at four years. The exceedings of the army, navy, and ordnance, together with the sums necessary for the indemnification of the American loyalists, he calculated, would not, during this period, fall short of three millions. The war, from which we were just delivered, had been most expensive and ruinous; these unavoidable exceedings were amongst the bitter fruits of it; but if, during the first years of peace, extraordinary expences were incurred, they afforded also extraordinary savings. There were sums appropriated, during the war, to different services, which had not been expended; four hundred and fifty thousand pounds had already been paid into the exchequer upon this account. There were moreover immense sums in the hands of former paymasters, which it was expected would soon be brought to account; these he conjecturally stated at the sum of one million. There was a balance of six hundred thousand pounds

pounds due to government from the East India company. When to these were added the improvements that might yet be made by judicious regulations in the different branches of the revenue, "he was not," Mr. Pitt said, "he hoped, too sanguine in affirming, that we possessed resources equal to all our ordinary and extraordinary demands." The proposition which he now submitted to the house was, the appropriation of the annual sum of one million to be invariably applied to the liquidation of the national debt: but as the surplus revenue amounted to only nine hundred thousand pounds, Mr. Pitt moved for an additional duty on spirits, on certain kinds of timber imported, and on perfumery, which would be together more than sufficient to make up the deficiency. This annual million Mr. Pitt proposed to vest in the hands of certain commissioners, to be by them applied regularly to the purchase of stock; so that no sum should ever lie within the grasp large enough to tempt him to violate this sacred deposit. The interests annually discharged were, conformably to this plan, to be added to, and incorporated with the original fund, so that it would operate with a determinate and accelerated velocity. This fund was also to be assisted by the annuities granted for different terms, which would from time to time fall in within the limited period of twenty-eight years, at the expiration of which, Mr. Pitt calculated that the fund would produce an income of four millions per annum.—The commissioners to be nominated under the act, were the chancellor of the exchequer, the speaker of the house of commons, the master of the rolls, the governor and deputy-governor of the bank of England, and the accountant-general of the high court of chancery.

XX. The only amendment of any material consequence suggested on Mr. Pitt's plan was, in the progress of the bill, offered by Mr. Fox, "that whenever a new loan should hereafter be made, the commissioners should be empowered to accept the loan, or such proportion of it, as should be equal to the cash then in their hands; the interest and *douceur* annexed to which should be applied to

to the purposes of the sinking fund." This amendment was readily and candidly accepted by Mr. Pitt, and the bill finally passed with great and deserved approbation.

XXI. Notwithstanding the acknowledged necessity of œconomy in every department of government, it is truly painful to relate, that even before the sinking fund bill passed into a law, a message from the king to the house of commons was delivered by the minister, stating, "that it gave him *great* concern to inform them, that it had not been found POSSIBLE to confine the expences of the civil list within the annual sum of eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds, now applicable to that purpose. A farther debt had been NECESSARILY incurred, and the king relied on the zeal and affection of his parliament to make provision for its discharge." When the last demand of this sort was made in July 1784, for the sum of sixty thousand pounds, Mr. Pitt rested his defence on the ground that the debt was contracted before he came last into office; but in support of the motion grounded on this message, he found it necessary to advance very different reasons. On this occasion, he stated "that under Mr. Burke's reform bill an annual reduction of fifty thousand pounds from the civil list had been set apart by parliament for the liquidation by instalments of the sum of three hundred thousand pounds, then issued in exchequer bills for the supply of former deficiencies. Of this debt, one hundred and eighty thousand pounds yet remained unpaid, and a fresh debt of thirty thousand pounds had accrued: and he justified the demand of a grant equal to these united sums upon this curious dilemma: either parliament had, at the period referred to, directed that when the proposed liquidation should be effected, the civil list should be allowed fifty thousand pounds per annum *more than was necessary*, or it was then put upon a footing of fifty thousand pounds per annum *less than was necessary*. Experience had proved the latter to be the case; and therefore it was reasonable to expect that the sum of two hundred and ten thousand pounds, now wanting to clear off the old and new in-

cumbrances,

cumbrances, would be voted without hesitation." Where applications of this nature are frequently repeated, the policy of Mr. Pitt's courtly logic in charging parliament with an over parsimony in its grants to the crown may be easily comprehended; yet it must be allowed, that a retrospective view of the different civil list establishments for the last century, will certainly justify the house of commons of 1782, in thinking it at least POSSIBLE that the DIGNITY of the CROWN might be sufficiently supported with eight hundred and fifty thousand pounds per annum. It would surely have been highly indecorous in a parliamentary debate to make any comparison on such a subject as this, between Great Britain and America; yet it might possibly occur to some of the members, that the executive government of that vast republic, was supported without any apparent forfeiture of dignity at less than the one fortieth part of the expence. This application was the more extraordinary, as at the opening of the session of December 1782, and when Mr. Pitt was chancellor of the exchequer, the king in his speech from the throne had said, "I have carried into strict execution the several reductions in my civil list expences directed by an act of last session; I have introduced a farther reform in other departments, and suppressed several sinecure places in them. I have by this means so regulated my establishments, that MY EXPENCES SHALL NOT IN FUTURE EXCEED MY INCOME." It was in the course of the discussion observed, that the necessity of the times rendered oeconomy in every part of the public expenditure indispensably necessary. All ranks of people ought to make it their first object, and it was the duty of the crown in particular to set the example. It was also urged, that while Mr. Burke's bill remained in full force, it was truly astonishing to come down in the face of an act of parliament, and call upon that house to vote money for the debts of the crown. It is almost superfluous to say, that all the arguments offered on this head proved a mere waste of words, and that the money was ultimately voted.

XXII. The remaining subject of importance that belongs to the history of this session, is the impeachment of Warren Hastings, Esq. late governor general of Bengal. In undertaking the arduous task of public accuser against this supposed great Indian delinquent, the various difficulties to be encountered, presented such a train of formidable obstacles to the successful prosecution of the accused, as only the spirit, the perseverance, and the inflexibility of Mr. Burke could overcome. That powerful India interest which had defeated the scheme of Mr. Fox, and effected the ruin of his administration, was to be exerted in vigorous hostility to the present measure. It was also obvious that the opinions of administration were much in favor of the ex-governor. The eulogiums repeatedly pronounced upon him by Mr. Dundas, were explicit indications of the part he intended to take; and Mr. Pitt himself was not only far from being prepossessed in favor of the accusing party, but was open in his commendation of the ability displayed in some of the leading parts of Mr. Hastings's later proceedings in India. In addition to these discouraging circumstances, the nation at large had long listened with cold indifference to the complaints of Indian delinquency, and seemed to consider the present prosecution rather as the unrelenting efforts of party spirit, directed solely to the destruction of an individual, than an attempt to vindicate the justice and equity of Britain, by the exemplary punishment of a man, whose crimes, it was asserted, had deeply stained the national honor and disgraced humanity. It may likewise be observed, that Mr. Burke could derive no encouragement to proceed from a review of former undertakings of a similar kind. The parliamentary prosecution of lord Clive by general Burgoyne was early defeated. The verdict of the court of king's bench against the persons concerned in the imprisonment and death of lord Pigot, could not be expected to impress the public mind with any idea of the enormity of Indian crimes. The bill of pains and penalties against sir Thomas Rumbold was said to be inadequate to its object, and

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ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

This Work being printed in a type of Elegance that may challenge Comparison, and in a size equally calculated to avoid the extreme diminutive Inconvenience and ponderous Inutility has obtained an unprecedented sale as to speed the most sanguine expectations of the Proprietor; and as it is executed on the same scale with the *French and British Poets*; it is rendered particularly convenient for pocket, an advantage which must be reckoned in an *Octavo* Edition.

From the Prices affixed to the present Edition, the Public may see how infinitely cheaper this History is than any yet submitted for their Choice; from the small and convenient Comports to which the Work is reduced, it might be apprehended, that the History was given in an enlarged Series. But to remove such Conjecture, the Editor assures the Public, it is printed on paper of *superior* to the Original Copy. He not only adverts to the Cheapness (which is no secondary Consideration) but to the peculiar Elegance of this Edition which he principally calls his Expectation of Public Patronage. It is printed on a better Paper, and more superbly embellished, than Edition at three Times the Price.

The great and unexampled Success which the *European* enjoyed in the Sale of his Edition of the *Select Novels*, and the *Select Poets*, he considers as an undoubted Test of the Public Approval; and as this Edition of the *History of England* is printed on the same, executed on the same Plan, and embelished with the same Cheapness, Elegance and Portability, he doubts not but it will with proportionate Encouragement. And as there are several Numbers of the *Select Novels* already published, they will form a Criterion, to form a Judgment of what they may expect in the Price of the present Edition of the History.

Hume's History of England shall be completed in thirty-three Volumes, Price Sixteen Shillings and Sixpence; *Smollett's Continuation* shall be completed in twenty-four Numbers; *Cromwell's Campaigns* to *Smollett* shall be completed in sixteen Numbers; and *Lloyd's Continuation* to *Cromwell*, which will bring the History down to the year 1702, shall be completed in only four Numbers.

By the smallness therefore to which this Edition is reduced, and consequent diminution of Price, it is rendered infinitely cheaper than any Edition that has hitherto been offered to the Public.

This important object of easy Purchase has been effected by the usual Mode of Printing with preposterous Margins, confounding the Lines, and unnecessary Blanks before and after Chapters, by which means former Editions have been embarrassed with superfluous Expence, without embracing one good Purpose for their sale. The Mode of easy Purchase has also been further promoted by the sale of a very considerable Portion of the Profits usually attained by the sale of known Comodities.

and was abruptly abandoned by its author. Mr. Burke, however, far from sinking under the pressure of circumstances so inauspicious to his design, resolutely persisted in his purpose; and having adopted the ancient mode of trial by impeachment, he proceeded on the fourth of April, 1786, to charge Warren Hastings, esq. before the house of commons, with high crimes and misdemeanors, exhibiting at the same time nine distinct articles of accusation, which in a few weeks were increased to the number of twenty two.

XXIII. Mr. Hastings, at his own express desire, appeared at the bar of the house of commons on the first of May, and delivered in his defence in answer to Mr. Burke's charges. The defence however was of little service to his cause, and contributed in a very slight degree to the vindication of his character. Though his assertions were bold, his arguments were weak, and the language of his defence was beyond all example boastful and arrogant. He had even the weakness and presumption to call in question the authority of the house to institute a judicial enquiry into his conduct. The house, unmoved by what they had heard, proceeded in the examination of evidence: and the first article of impeachment respecting the Rohilla war was brought formally before the house on the first of June: after a very long debate, the question was decided in favor of Mr. Hastings, ayes for the impeachment being 67, noes 119. On the thirteenth of June, the second charge relative to the Rajah of Benares being brought forward, it was resolved by the house, on a division of 119 to 79 voices, "that this charge contained matter of impeachment against the late governor general of Bengal." On the eleventh of July an adjournment was put to these proceedings for the present, by a prorogation of the parliament, which was dismissed with assurances of "the particular satisfaction with which the king had observed their diligent attention to the public business, and the measures they had adopted for improving the resources of the country."

XXIV. On the second of August, after the rising of parliament,

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Hume's History of England shall be completed in thirty-three Numbers, Price Sixteen Shillings and Sixpence: *Smollett's Continuation of Hume* shall be completed in twenty-four Numbers: *Cornick's Continuation to Smollett* shall be completed in only ten Numbers: and *Lloyd's Continuation to Cornick*, which will bring the History down to the year 1790, shall be completed in only four Numbers.

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A. D. 1786.

GEORGE III.

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XXIV. On the second of August, after the rising of parliament,

parliament, a singular incident occurred, which engrossed for a short time the attention of the public. As the king was alighting from his post chariot, at the garden entrance of St. James's palace, a woman decently dressed presented a paper to his majesty; and while he was in the act of receiving it, she struck with a concealed knife at his breast. The king happily avoided the blow by drawing back; and as she was preparing to make a second thrust, one of the yeomen caught her arm, and the weapon was wrenched out of her hand. The king, with great temper exclaimed, "I am not hurt—take care of the poor woman, do not hurt her." On examination before the privy council, it immediately appeared that the woman was insane. Being asked where she had lately resided, she answered frantically, "That she had been all abroad since that matter of the crown broke out." Being farther questioned what matter? she said, "That the crown was her's; and that if she had not her right, England would be deluged in blood for a thousand generations." On being interrogated as to the nature of her right, she refused to answer, saying in the genuine style of royalty, "That her rights were a mystery." It appeared that this poor maniac, whose name was Margaret Nicholson, had presented a petition ten days before, full of wild and incoherent nonsense. Like most other petitions, it had probably never been read, or the person of the petitioner would have been secured. The idea of a judicial process was of course abandoned, and she was confined to an apartment provided for her in Bethlehem hospital.

XXV. In the month of September, the king was pleased to appoint a new committee of council for the consideration of all matters relating to trade and foreign plantations. Of this board, the famous Charles Jenkinson, now for his long and faithful services created lord Hawkesbury, and constituted chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, was declared president. Under the auspices of this new commission, a TREATY OF COMMERCE was on September the twenty sixth, signed between

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GEORGE III.

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the courts of England and France. Its general principle was to admit the mutual importation and exportation of the commodities of each country at a very low *ad valorem* duty. The negotiator of this treaty was Mr. Eden, who under the coalition administration had filled the lucrative office of vice-treasurer of Ireland. This was the first memorable defection from that unfortunate alliance: and it was the more remarkable, as Mr. Eden had himself been generally considered as the original projector of the coalition, or at least as the man who might contest that honor with Mr. Burke.

XXVI. About the same time a convention was signed with Spain of some importance, as it finally terminated the long subsisting disputes respecting the British settlements on the Mosquito shore and the coast of Honduras. By the present treaty the Mosquito settlements were formally and explicitly relinquished, as they had already virtually been by the sixth article of the general treaty of 1783. In return the boundaries of the British settlements on the coast and bay of Honduras were somewhat extended. In a political view this convention answered a valuable purpose, as it removed a probable source of national disagreement. But the claims of humanity and justice were not sufficiently attended to: for the Mosquito settlers, who had for time immemorial occupied their lands and habitations under the protection of the English government, and who amounted to many hundred families in number, were peremptorily commanded to evacuate the country without exception, in the space of eighteen months, nothing farther being stipulated in their favor, than that his catholic majesty "shall order his governors to grant to the said English, so dispersed, all possible facilities for their removal to the settlements agreed upon by the present convention." The greatest confusion, consternation, and distress among this unhappy people were the inevitable consequences of this barbarous edict of expulsion, which with the cold-blooded politicians of Europe, at the distance of three thousand miles, passed only for a regulation of commerce. An

affecting representation of their distresses, and an humble petition for some sort of indemnification from the government which had thus shamefully abandoned them to their fate, was subsequently presented to the board of treasury ; but it does not appear to have excited any attention.

1787. XXVII. The parliament re-assembled on January the twenty third 1787, but no subject of material import came under discussion till the twelfth of February, when the house resolved itself into a committee on the commercial treaty with France. On this occasion, Mr. Pitt entered into a most able and eloquent vindication of the measure. He declared in energetic terms his abhorrence of the maxim, that any nation was destined to be the natural and unalterable enemy of another. It had no foundation in the experience of nations, or in the history of men. It was a libel on the constitution of political societies, and supposed the existence of infernal malignity in our original frame. France, in most of our wars, had certainly been the aggressor ; but her assurances and frankness in the present negotiation were such as to entitle her to a return of confidence. It was indeed ridiculous to imagine that the French would consent to yield advantages without the idea of compensation. The treaty would doubtless be a benefit to them ; but he did not hesitate to say it would be a much greater benefit to us. She gained for her wines and other productions a great and opulent market. We did the same for our manufactures to a far greater degree. She procured a market of eight millions of people, we a market of twenty four millions. Both nations were disposed and prepared for such a connection. France, by the peculiar dispensation of providence, was gifted perhaps more than any other country upon earth with what made life desirable in point of soil, climate and natural productions, in the most fertile vineyards and the richest harvests. Britain, on the other hand, possessing these advantages in an inferior degree, had from the happy freedom of its constitution, and the equal security of its laws,

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risen to a state of commercial grandeur, and acquired the ability of supplying France with the requisite conveniences of life, in exchange for her natural luxuries.

XXVIII. Though some objections tolerably plausible were suggested by the leaders of opposition against this measure; yet the only topic on which they insisted with any advantage, and indeed the only real difficulty, respecting the execution of this treaty, arose from its inconsistency with the famous Methuen treaty, concluded with Portugal early in the present century; and in conformity to which the duties on Portugal wines were to bear in future the proportion of only two-thirds of those imported from France and other countries. But this point being candidly conceded by France in the progress of the business, the measure received, as it well deserved, the necessary concurrence and sanction of parliament; and the whole transaction terminated greatly to the honor of the minister, and the advantage of the nation.

XXIX. The subject which next claims our attention, will be found upon every account highly interesting. The great personage to whom it relates is the heir apparent of the British crown, and to develop the character and trace the dispositions in the earlier and more personal transactions of *him*, upon whom the welfare of millions will in a certain degree depend, and who will probably govern one of the most enlightened nations in Europe, at a period of still greater refinement and knowledge than the present,—arrests the mind by every motive that can affect us as individuals, as citizens, and as men. In addition to the rank and character of the party, the narrative is rendered still more attractive by private anecdote, by delicacy of situation, and by a new and uncommon circumstance, that alarmed the apprehensions of many, and employed the reflections of all. To enter minutely into the character of a prince, who has had but little opportunity for the display of public talents, will not be expected. He is generally allowed not to be deficient, either in the natural powers of the understanding, or in the accomplishments of education.

education. His manners are affable and engaging, and his conversation sensible, judicious and polite. At the same time his disposition is full of animation and passion; and whether engaged in the pursuit of honorable and just purposes, or in a temporary deviation from ethical rectitude, he is alike incapable of a cold and phlegmatic moderation. When his royal highness attained the age of majority, A. D. 1783, the sum of fifty thousand pounds per annum only was allotted to him out of the civil list revenue to defray the whole expence of his establishment. Considering the numerous salaries payable to the officers of his household, this sum was clearly inadequate to the support of his rank and situation in life; and the then ministers, Mr. Fox and lord North, strongly insisted upon the necessity of fixing the revenue of the prince at one hundred thousand pounds per annum, which the late king had enjoyed as prince of Wales, at a period when the civil list produced two hundred thousand pounds per annum less than at present. To this the sovereign positively objected; and the prince, to prevent disagreeable consequences, generously declared that he chose to depend on the spontaneous bounty of the king. The obvious result of this miserable oeconomy was, that the prince in the four years which were now elapsed had contracted debts to a large amount; his negligence as to pecuniary concerns being perhaps increased by the consciousness of the extreme difficulty of contracting his expences within the narrow limits of his income. The public not sufficiently adverting to these circumstances, censured the prince with a too rigid severity for the heedlessness and prodigality of his conduct. It was however too notorious to admit of disguise or palliation, that the prince was exempt from none of those youthful indiscretions and excesses by which men of high rank in early life are for the most part so unhappily characterised.

XXX. The prince of Wales, like most other young men, had been more distinguished by a general regard to the fair sex than for any particular individual attachment.

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ment. A report however of a serious nature had for some time past gained very general credit; namely, that the prince had contracted a secret marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, a lady of family, and justly celebrated for her personal beauty and mental accomplishments. That the prince should not be privately married, was an event particularly guarded against by the royal marriage act. By this act it was declared that the heir apparent was incapable of marrying till the age of twenty five years, without his father's consent, or in case of refusal, without the consent of both houses of parliament. The marriage therefore if it had taken place, was null in law. But this was by no means the circumstance which made the greatest impression upon the public mind. The lady was educated in the Roman catholic religion, and the act of settlement which seated the house of Brunswick on the British throne, expressly declared the prince who married a catholic to have forfeited his right of succession to the crown. To add to the difficulties of a situation in the highest degree trying and critical, the prince found his embarrassments continually increasing, and a large debt already accumulated. In the summer therefore of 1786, the prince applied to the king his father for assistance, but meeting with a peremptory refusal, he immediately adopted a resolution, which in every view reflected the highest honor on his character. Suppressing the establishment of his household, he formally vested forty thousand pounds per annum of his revenue in the hands of trustees for the liquidation of his debts. His stud of running horses, his hunters, and even his coach horses were sold by public auction. The elegant improvements and additions making to the palace of Carlton-house were suddenly stopped, and the most splendid apartments shut up from use. In this manner he thought proper to retire from the splendor of his station, rather than forfeit the honor of a gentleman by practising on the credulity of his creditors. In less than a month from the period in which he had discharged his household, the attempt was made on the life of the so-

vereign

vereign as already related. The prince was at Brighton when this event took place, and the account reached him, not by immediate conveyance from the king but by the information of a private friend. Without a moment's delay he travelled post to Windsor and had an interview with her majesty. Upon this occasion it might have been expected that the affection which naturally subsists between the parent and the child would have produced an instantaneous and perfect reconciliation. They did not see one another. The king knew that the prince was in the house, but he did not think proper to summon him to his presence. The prince on his part did not demand an interview, because court etiquette seemed to have placed the necessity of the first overture on the other side, and because he probably imagined that he had evinced by his present visit the tenderest solicitude for the welfare of his royal father. To account for this apparent coldness on the part of his majesty, it is necessary to observe, that the king was supposed to be displeased with the circumstance of the prince having discharged his household without consulting his inclinations or demanding his consent. It was also generally believed that the king participated in the feelings of many of his subjects respecting Mrs. Fitzherbert. To counteract the effects of the rumoured marriage, it was absolutely necessary that the report should be contradicted by the person to whom it immediately related. In the present case however there were strong reasons for not adopting this expedient. The pride of the lady's family, the delicacy due to herself seemed to require that a certain degree of mystery and silence should rest upon the transaction. From this combination of circumstances the coldness, reserve, and distance, unhappily subsisting for some time between his majesty and the prince, will find an easy and perfect solution.

XXXI. The prince had lived in a state of retirement for near a twelvemonth, when he was persuaded to countenance a proposal for laying the state of his affairs before parliament; and on the twentieth of April Mr. alderman Newnham, member for the city of London, gave

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notice that he would bring forward a motion for an address to the King, praying him to take the situation of the prince into consideration, and to grant him such relief as he in his wisdom should think fit, and pledging the house to make good the same. This gave rise to an interesting conversation; and Mr. Newnham was by the minister and many other members earnestly entreated to withdraw his motion, as fertile of inconvenience and mischief. Mr. Pitt said, "that by the perseverance of Mr. Newnham, he should be driven to the disclosure of circumstances which he should otherwise have thought it his duty to conceal." Mr. Rolle, member for Devonshire, declared, "that the investigation of this question involved in it circumstances which tended immediately to affect the constitution in church and state." Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and other gentlemen in the confidence of the prince, declared, "that there was nothing his royal highness less feared than a full and impartial investigation of his conduct; and nothing that he would more deprecate, than a studied ambiguity or affected tenderness on the pretence of respect and indulgence." Mr. Rolle was particularly called upon, but in vain, to explain the extraordinary language he had used. The subject being in a few days resumed, Mr. Fox again called the attention of the house to the declaration of Mr. Rolle. "To what that declaration alluded (Mr. Fox said) it was impossible to ascertain, till the person who made it thought proper to explain his meaning; but he supposed it must refer to that base and malicious calumny which had been propagated without doors by the enemies of the prince, with a view to depreciate his character, and injure him in the esteem of his country." Mr. Fox further declared, "that the prince had authorised him to assert, that as a peer of parliament, he was ready in the other house to submit to any the most pointed questions that could be put to him upon the subject, or to afford the king or his ministers the fullest assurances of the utter falshood of the fact in question." Mr. Rolle now thought proper to acknowledge, that the subject upon which Mr. Fox had spoken,

spoken, was the matter to which he alluded as affecting both church and state. He said, "that the reports relative to this transaction had made a deep impression upon the minds of all men who loved and venerated the constitution. He knew that this thing could not have been accomplished under the formal sanction of law; but if it existed as a fact, it might be productive of the most alarming consequences, and ought to be satisfactorily cleared up." Mr. Fox replied, "that he did not deny the calumny in question merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws, but he denied it *in toto*, in fact as well as in law. The fact not only could never have happened legally, but never did happen any way, and had from the beginning been a vile and malignant falsehood." Mr. Rolle rose again, and asked, "whether in what he now asserted Mr. Fox spoke from direct authority?" Mr. Fox said he had spoken from direct authority. In consequence of these explicit and authoritative asseverations, Mr. Rolle was loudly called upon to express his satisfaction: but this he obstinately declined, saying only "that the house would judge for themselves of what had passed." On this Mr. Sheridan was provoked to declare, "that if Mr. Rolle persisted in his refusal, or otherwise to put the matter into such a state of enquiry as *should* satisfy him, the house ought to come to a resolution, "that it was seditious and disloyal to propagate reports injurious to the prince." Mr. Pitt now properly interposed, and protested against so flagrant an attack on the freedom of speech and deliberation in that house. And it must be confessed that Mr. Rolle was so far justified as the voice of the public could justify him, in retaining his doubts; for a general and firm persuasion still prevailed of a secret marriage between the prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert, though no one presumed to call in question the honor of Mr. Fox in the declarations made by him in the prince's name, for which he undoubtedly had, or thought he had, sufficient authority, and which operated to the perfect apparent conviction of the house of commons.

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XXXII. In this stage of the business an interview, at the desire of the king, took place between the prince of Wales and Mr. Pitt at Carlton house; and the prince was informed, "that if the intended motion were withdrawn, every thing might be settled to his royal highness's satisfaction." This being acceded to, a message was delivered by the minister from the king to the house, stating his majesty's great concern, "that from the accounts of the prince of Wales, it appeared that he had incurred a debt to a large amount, which, painful as it was to him to propose any addition to the burthens of his people, he was induced by his paternal affection to the prince, to desire the assistance of parliament to discharge—on the well-grounded expectation, nevertheless, that the prince would avoid contracting any debts in future; with a view to which, the king had directed a sum of ten thousand pounds to be paid out of the civil list, in addition to his former allowance; and he had the satisfaction to observe, that the prince had given the fullest assurance of his determination to confine his future expences within his income, and had settled a plan, and fixed an order in those expences, which it was trusted would effect the due execution of his intentions." On the very next day after the accounts referred to in the royal message were laid before the house, and of which the dignified generosity of parliament suffered not the inspection, an address was voted to the king, to request him to direct the sum of one hundred and sixty one thousand pounds to be paid out of the civil list for the full discharge of the debts of the prince of Wales, and the farther sum of twenty thousand pounds to complete the repairs of Carlton house.

XXXIII. The subject of Mr. Hastings's impeachment had been resumed early in the present session, and had occupied a large proportion of time and attention. The primary charge respecting the Rohilla War, brought forward towards the conclusion of the session of 1786, had made a deep impression upon the house; and although Mr. Hastings had been acquitted of the charge, it was upon

upon grounds on which it was impossible to rest his future defence. The conduct of the minister in this business had been hitherto indecisive and mysterious; but the part taken by Mr. Jenkinson, and the party of which he was considered as the head, left no room for doubt as to the secret inclination of the court. Mr. Pitt had negatived the charge of the Rohilla war, upon the ground that Mr. Hastings had subsequent to that event received the highest certificate of legislative approbation, by being nominated by act of parliament, governor general of India: and although on the Benares charge he had voted against Mr. Hastings, he expressly declared that he did not upon that account consider himself as committed to a final vote of impeachment. The grand question therefore still remained doubtful, when on the seventh of February 1787, Mr. Sheridan opened the third charge respecting the Begum princess of Oude, with an eloquence and energy which were perhaps never surpassed, and which, in their consequences, proved completely decisive. On this occasion Mr. Pitt acted a part which did him great honor. Though the wonderful speech of Mr. Sheridan had excited a spirit of enthusiasm in the house, which perhaps no degree of ministerial influence could have counteracted, it would be highly invidious and unjust to attribute the decided conduct of Mr. Pitt on this memorable night to the dread of being left in a minority, by an attempt to negative the motion. On the contrary, he appeared penetrated with a perfect conviction of the atrocity of the facts, and of the strength of the evidence by which they were supported: and the minister, who, in the comparatively insignificant business of an election return, could so far degrade himself as to countenance, and even publicly to vindicate an act of deliberate injustice, now felt all the sympathies of humanity, all the energies of virtue awakened in his breast, and impelling him to testify, in terms the most explicit and expressive, his detestation of perfidy so vile, of cruelty so remorseless. On a division the numbers were, in favor of the motion 175, against it 68.

XXXIV. On the second of March Mr. Pelham opened the charge relative to the Nabob of Ferruckabud, which was affirmed by 112 against 50 voices. On the fifteenth of March the charge upon the subject of contracts was brought forward by sir James Erskine; and on this article the division was ayes 60; noes 26. Upon the twenty second of March, the charge relative to Fyzoola Kan was introduced by Mr. Windham; and was carried on a division of 96 against 37 voices. On the second of April, Mr. Sheridan opened to the house the charge upon the subject of presents; and on this occasion he observed, "that the late governor general had, in every part of his conduct, exhibited proofs of a wild, eccentric, and irregular mind. He had been every thing by starts, and nothing long—now high and lofty, now mean and insidious,—now artful and temporizing, now rigid and inflexible,—in pride, in passion, in all things changeable, except in corruption. His revenge was a tempest, a *tornado* blackening the horizon, and involving all within the sphere of its influence in one common destruction. But his corruption was regular and systematic, a *monsoon* blowing uniformly from one point of the compass, and waisting the wealth of India to the same port in one certain direction." Upon a division, the numbers appeared ayes 165, noes 64. On the nineteenth of April the charge respecting the revenues was opened by Mr. Francis, who had formerly occupied, with much honor to himself, the office of member in the supreme council of India, and who had recently taken his seat as a member of the house of commons. This charge was confirmed, notwithstanding the unexpected dissent of the minister, by 110 to 55 voices.

XXXV. On the ninth of May the report made by Mr. Burke from the committee, to whom it had been referred to prepare the articles of impeachment, was confirmed by the house, ayes 175, noes 89. On the following day it was voted that Mr. Hastings be IMPEACHED: and Mr. Burke accordingly, in the name of the house of commons, and of all the commons of Great Britain, re-

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paired to the bar of the house of lords, and impeached Mr. Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors ; at the same time acquainting their lordships, that the commons would with all convenient speed exhibit articles against him, and make good the same. On the fourteenth another charge respecting misdemeanors in Oude was added to the former, and voted without a division ; and on the twenty first Mr. Hastings, being conducted to the bar of the house of lords by the serjeant at arms, was taken into the custody of the black rod ; but on the motion of the lord chancellor was admitted to bail—himself in twenty thousand pounds, and two sureties, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Summer, in ten thousand pounds each ; and he was ordered to deliver in an answer to the articles of impeachment in one month from that time, or upon the second day of the next session of parliament.

XXXVI. On the thirtieth of May 1787, the king put an end to the present session, by a speech applauding “ the measures taken by parliament respecting the reduction of the national debt, and the treaty of navigation and commerce with the most christian king. He spoke of the general tranquillity of Europe, and lamented the dissensions, which unhappily prevailed amongst the states of the united provinces.”

XXXVII. During the recess of parliament, the attention of government was particularly attracted by the troubled state of Holland. In the autumn of the year 1787, the dissensions which had long subsisted between the stadtholder and the states of Holland, had risen to an alarming height, and the ultimate event of the contest seemed to depend greatly on the forbearance or interposition of foreign nations. The French were known to be friendly to the states of Holland, but they were too deeply engaged by their domestic situation, to be able to render them any effectual assistance. On the other hand, the cause of the stadtholder was warmly espoused by the king of Prussia, in conjunction with Great Britain. From the commencement of the contest, the incapacity and intractability of the prince of Orange had been very apparent.

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rent. Head of the house of Nassau, he displayed neither the talents nor virtues which had for ages been supposed attached to that illustrious name. The princess, his consort, was said to possess a much larger share of spirit as well as understanding. In the month of June 1787, for reasons which have never perfectly transpired, her royal highness, then resident at Nimeguen, adopted the bold and hazardous resolution of proceeding in person to the Hague, where the states general were at that time assembled, accompanied only by the baroness de Wassenaer and a few domestics. As might previously be expected, she was arrested in her progress at about a league beyond Schoonhoven, and forced back to Nimeguen. If the king of Prussia recommended this journey with a view of drawing from it, as was generally believed, some plausible ground of interfering in behalf of the house of Orange, it fully answered his intention, for this incident brought matters to a crisis. On the tenth of July a memorial was addressed by the Prussian monarch to the states of Holland, in which he affected to consider the indignity offered to the princess of Orange his sister, as a personal insult to himself. To avenge this pretended affront, the duke of Brunswick, who commanded the Prussian forces in the contiguous Duchy of Cleves, entered Holland at the head of an army consisting of about twenty thousand men on the thirteenth of September. Notwithstanding the previous probability of this invasion, the consternation of the Dutch nation was extreme, and the country seemed every where unprepared for resistance. Utrecht, beyond all other cities of the union distinguished by the violence of her democratic zeal, surrendered almost as soon as summoned. The march of the Prussian general bore the appearance of a triumphal procession. While the futile resolve to suspend the office of stadtholder passed the senate of Amsterdam, Gorcum, Dordt, Schoonhoven and other towns in his route submitted tamely to the conqueror. On the seventh day from the commencement of the invasion, the prince of Orange made his public entry into the Hague. Amsterdam only made a

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shew of resistance; but on the tenth of October that proud capital, now closely invested, opened its gates to the victor. To the astonishment of the world, that republic which maintained a contest of eighty years against the power of Spain; which contended for the empire of the ocean with Great Britain; which repulsed the attacks of Louis the fourteenth in the zenith of his glory; was over-run by the arms of Prussia in a single month. In the whole of this transaction Prussia acted in intimate and avowed concert with Great Britain; and it was on this occasion that the British government concluded a subsidiary treaty with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel; by which the latter engaged to furnish England with a body of twelve thousand men at four weeks notice, for thirty-six thousand pounds per annum. It is to be hoped that a similar transaction will never again stain the annals of our country, where the authority of Britain will be asserted on the side of despotism, and a foreign state shall presume to arrest any power of Europe in its ardent pursuit of liberty—in its glorious struggles to obtain a free constitution. So late as the month of September, and just before the duke of Brunswick began his march, France tardily professed her intention of assisting the Dutch in case they were attacked by any foreign power. This circumstance animated the court of London to act with spirit and decision, and vigorous naval preparations were made to support the King of Prussia, in opposition to the menacing declarations of France. But the object of the Prussian expedition being accomplished in a much shorter space of time than could have been previously imagined, the court of Versailles found itself disengaged from all obligations. The duke of Dorset ambassador at Paris, in consequence of the events which had taken place, presented on the twenty-seventh of October a memorial to the king of France, signifying “that no subject of discussion, much less of contest, now remaining between the two courts, he was authorised to ask, whether it was the intention of his most christian majesty to carry into effect the notification made by his most christian majesty’s plenipotentiary, which, by announcing

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nouncing that succours would be given to Holland, had occasioned the naval armaments on the part of his Britannic majesty, which armaments have been reciprocal. If the court of Versailles is disposed to explain herself satisfactorily on the subject, the ambassador proposes that all warlike preparations should be discontinued, and that the navies of the two nations should be again placed on the footing of the peace establishment, as it stood on the first of January of the present year." To this memorial the count de Montmorin, the new minister for foreign affairs in France, replied on the very same day, in a style of exemplary forbearance and moderation, "that the intention of his majesty not being, and never having been, to interfere by force in the affairs of Holland, the communication made to the court of London, on the sixteenth of last month having had no other object than to announce to that court an intention, the motives to which no longer existed, especially since the king of Prussia has imparted his resolution; his majesty makes no scruple to declare, that he will not give any effect to the declaration above mentioned, and agrees with pleasure to the proposal of mutually disarming, made on the part of his Britannic majesty."

XXXVIII. In consequence of these transactions, it was found necessary to assemble the parliament of Great Britain somewhat earlier than is usual in time of peace; and, the session having commenced on the twenty seventh of November, the king, in his speech to both houses, remarked, "that at the close of the last session he had informed them of the concern with which he observed the disputes unhappily subsisting in the republic of the united provinces. Their situation soon afterwards became more critical and alarming. The king of Prussia having demanded satisfaction for the insult offered to the princess of Orange his sister, the party which had *usurped* the government applied to the most christian king for assistance; and that prince having notified to his majesty his intention of granting their request, the king did not hesitate to declare that he could not remain a quiet spectator, and

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gave immediate orders for augmenting his forces both by sea and land ; and in the course of this transaction he had concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel. In the mean time the rapid success of the duke of Brunswick enabled the provinces to deliver themselves from the *oppression* under which they laboured ; and all subjects of contest being thus removed, an amicable explanation had taken place between the courts of London and Versailles."

XXXIX. It is worthy of transient remark that the language of the speech from the throne was rather that of a zealous partisan of the house of Orange, than of a great monarch, who, by a vigorous and seasonable interposition, had restored tranquillity to a country, convulsed by internal feuds and dissensions. It is inconceivable how the existing government of Holland could with any colour of justice be stigmatized as an *usurpation*; for by the constitution of that country the prince of Orange as stadtholder was not a sovereign, but a subject possessing no share of the legislative power; and though by the *formula* of 1747 the office was declared hereditary, it was not on that account irrevocable any more than the hereditary offices of earl marshal or great chamberlain under the English constitution. And the *oppressions* alluded to in the speech were certainly nothing more than the usual severities inflicted upon those who presumed to resist the measures of the supreme government. If the British court imagined that their recent conduct, in interfering in the internal concerns of another nation, was not a violation of the fundamental principles of political justice, it will in the sequel be found that the Dutch not only thought otherwise, but entertained a deep and lasting resentment against England, for what they with some reason deemed an outrageous attack on their rights and independence. It must however be confessed that the prompt and vigorous measures of the English cabinet were absolutely necessary to counteract the insidious designs of France in her projected interference in the affairs of Holland, and in this point of view their conduct was highly

highly and deservedly applauded by the nation. The addresses in answer to the king's speech were voted with great unanimity in both houses; and the subsidy to Hesse passed without a dissentient vote.

XL. In a short time treaties of alliance were concluded between the courts of London, Berlin, and the Hague; by which the two former guaranteed the stadtholderate in perpetuity to the serene house of Orange, as an essential part of the constitution of the united provinces. By the treaty between the kings of Great Britain and Prussia, each of the high contracting powers engages, in case of attack, to furnish the other with a succour of sixteen thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry, or an equivalent in money, within the term of two months from the date of the requisition. Thus was Britain once more fatally entangled in the intricate and inextricable toils of continental engagements.

XLI. The most considerable legislative measure of the present session, related to a controversy which had arisen between the board of control and the East India company. At the moment of the general alarm excited by the affairs of Holland, government proposed to the directors, to send out four regiments of the king's troops, as a reinforcement to the army in India, upon condition that the whole expence was defrayed by the company. This proposal was at first partly accepted, but the rumor of war having speedily subsided, the matter was reconsidered by the board of direction and finally rejected. They contended, that lord North's bill of 1781 expressly provided, that the company should pay only for such troops as by *their* requisition should be sent to India; and the opinion of different eminent lawyers who had been consulted on the subject, appeared perfectly to coincide with that of the directors. Part of the troops however were already prepared for embarkation, and the company refusing to admit them on board their ships, the minister, to extricate himself from this perplexing dilemma, introduced into parliament his famous declaratory act, to shew that his own India bill of 1784 had vested

vested in the board of control, and not in the directors, the supreme power of determining the propriety of every such measure. The declaratory bill met with a most formidable opposition in parliament. Colonel Barre protested that he had from the first discerned the traces of a system of Indian patronage, of which he believed the bill under discussion to be a great advance to the final completion; and if it should be suffered to pass, a fatal stab would be given to the constitution. Indeed the opposition had never perhaps on any occasion juster grounds of exultation and triumph than at present. The India bill of 1784 had proved (as they had foreseen and foretold) a source of perpetual altercation and dispute between the boards of direction and control; and an attempt to explain and determine its sense, by a declaratory law, was an unanswerable proof of its imperfections. But the insidious nature of the regulation bill was now also fully demonstrated, for under pretext of declaring its meaning, it was notorious that new and important powers were conferred on the board of control. Mr. Sheridan called upon the house to compare the power of Mr. Fox's commissioners with those which were now asserted to belong to the board of control. Lord Fitzwilliam could not send out a dispatch; he could neither declare war, nor make peace in India; he could neither collect the revenues of the company, nor apply them to the purposes he should think proper, without having first the pleasure of the king signified to him through the medium of the secretary of state. The board of control could do all this. The minister had now violated that compact with the company on which he originally and professedly stood; how then could he escape the ignominy of deliberately breaking his most solemn engagements? Mr. Burke desired to be informed by administration, "whether when they brought in the act of 1784, and complained that Mr. Fox's bill took too much, they had honestly stated that all they meant to take was the military power, the political direction, the management of the revenue, and as much as they could get of the commerce?"

commerce? The question then to have put to the house would have been, in whose hands they were willing this power should be entrusted? In the hands of seven of the most respectable men in the kingdom, of parliamentary appointment, or with the shreds and remnants of office? The public had been at that time infatuated, hurried on to madness. The mob of 1784 had destroyed the house of commons, and in so doing they had destroyed the paladium of their privileges; but now he indulged the hope of seeing the house rise like a phoenix regenerated from its ashes." The question of commitment was carried by a majority of fifty-seven voices only; and on being carried into the house of lords it experienced a second opposition not less violent than the first. It passed at length, accompanied with a protest signed by sixteen peers, in which the declaratory bill was reprobated as friendly to corrupt intrigue and cabal—hostile to all good government—and abhorrent to the principles of our constitution.

1788. XLII. In the early part of the session, Mr. Hastings had delivered in his answer to the impeachment of the commons, who immediately appointed a committee of managers to make good the same, and the trial commenced on the fifteenth of February 1788 in Westminster hall, which was fitted up for the purpose with great magnificence. Mr. Burke was four days in making his preliminary speech, which was filled with vehement invective, with much rhetorical exaggeration, and with matter almost wholly extraneous to the subject of the impeachment. The friends of Mr. Burke extolled this speech as a more than Ciceronian effort of eloquence; but the public considered it as injudicious, extravagant, and bombastical, and which discovered at least as much weakness in the accuser as criminality in the accused. On the twenty second of February, the Benares charge was opened by Mr. Fox; and concluded on the twenty-fifth by Mr. Gray, member for Northumberland, a gentleman, whose talents at a very early period of life attracted an eminent degree the attention of the house, of which

which he was soon perceived destined to be one of the chief and most distinguished ornaments. On the fifteenth of April the charge relative to the Begums of Oude was brought forward by Mr. Adam, and the evidence on this charge was summed up by Mr. Sheridan with transcendent ability.

XLIII. The last business of importance which engaged the attention of parliament, was a bill to regulate the transportation of slaves from the coast of Africa to the West Indies. This bill, which was intended merely to establish a certain reasonable proportion between the number of the slaves and the tonnage of the ships, was violently and obstinately opposed by petitions from the merchants of London and Liverpool, concerned in the African trade. Counsel being therefore engaged and witnesses examined, it appeared in evidence at the bar of the house, that five feet six inches in length, and sixteen inches in breadth was the average space allotted to each slave. The lower deck of the vessel was entirely covered with bodies. The space between the floor of that deck and the roof above in height about five feet eight inches, was divided by a platform, also covered with human bodies. The slaves were chained two and two by their hands and feet, and by means of ring-bolts fastened to the deck. In that sultry climate their allowance was a pint of water each *per diem*; and they were usually fed twice a day with yams and horse-beans. After meals they were compelled by the whip to jump in their irons, which by those unfeeling monsters the slave dealers was called dancing. They had not, as was emphatically stated, when stowed together so much room as a man in his *coffin*, either in length or breadth. They drew their breath with laborious and painful efforts, and many unable to support the struggle died of suffocation. The customary mortality of the voyage exceeded seventeen times the usual estimation of human life. A slave ship when full fraught with the cargo of wretchedness and abomination, exhibited at once the extremes of human depravity and human misery. In reviewing this superlatively wicked and detestable traffic

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Mr. Pitt with indignant eloquence declared, "that if, as had been asserted by the members of Liverpool, the trade could not be carried on in any other manner, he would retract what he had said on a former day, and waving every farther discussion, give his instant vote for the annihilation of a traffic thus shocking to humanity. He trusted that the house being now in possession of such evidence as was never before exhibited, would endeavour to extricate themselves from the guilt and remorse which every man ought to feel for having so long over-looked such cruelty and oppression." The bill was carried up June the eighteenth to the house of lords, where it was voted to encounter the determined opposition of lord Thurlow. His lordship said that the bill was full of inconsistency and nonsense. The French had lately offered premiums to encourage the African trade, and the natural presumption was, that we ought to do the same. This measure appeared to him very like a breach of parliamentary faith. As to himself he scrupled not to say, "that the fit of philanthropy which had slept so many years had been suffered to sleep one summer longer, it would have appeared to him more wise than to take up the subject in this disjointed manner." The duke of Chandos ventured to predict a general insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies in consequence of the agitation of the ancient question: and lord Sidney, who had once ranked amongst the friends of liberty, expressed in warm terms his admiration of the system of the slave laws established in Jamaica, and saw no room for any improvement. The bill however had a number of friends, and to the honor of parliament, the nation, and human nature, finally passed by a considerable majority.

XLIV. The king put an end to the session July the seventh, by a speech from the throne, in which he complimented the two houses on their attention and liberality. His faithful subjects had every reason," as he affirmed, to expect the continuance of the blessings of peace, and engagements which he had recently formed with the king of Prussia and the states general of the united provinces

vinces would, he trusted, promote the security and welfare of his own dominions, and contribute to the general tranquillity of Europe."

XLV. Soon after the recess of parliament, the king, who had been for some time rather indisposed, was advised by his physicians to try the mineral waters of Cheltenham. His majesty accordingly took a journey to that place, and as was reported, drank the waters in too profuse a quantity. His health appeared, nevertheless, during his residence there, greatly established; but soon after his arrival at Windsor, late in the summer, his illness returned with new and alarming symptoms. By the end of October, it could no longer be concealed that the majesty of the king was of a nature peculiarly afflictive and dreadful. A mental derangement had taken place, which rendered him totally incapable of public business. The parliament stood prorogued to the twentieth of November, and on the fourteenth of that month circular letters were addressed to the members of the legislature signifying that the indisposition of the sovereign rendered it doubtful whether there would be a possibility of receiving his commands for the further prorogation of parliament. If not, in that case the two houses must of necessity assemble, and the attendance of the different members was earnestly requested. Parliament being accordingly assembled, the state of the king's health was formally notified to the house of peers by the lord chancellor, and to the commons by Mr. Pitt: and as the session of parliament could not be opened in the regular mode, an adjournment of fourteen days was recommended and adopted. Upon the re-assembling of parliament, December the fourth, a report of the board of privy council was presented to the two houses, containing an examination of the royal physicians; and it was properly suggested, that, considering the extreme delicacy of the subject and the person concerned, parliament would do well to rest satisfied without any more direct or explicit information, especially as the examinations of council had been taken upon oath, which the house of commons

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had no power to administer : doubts however were started by Mr. Fox, Mr. Burke, and others of the same party, whether parliament could in this momentous case dispense with that sort of evidence on which they had been accustomed to proceed. As the minister's chief object was procrastination, the objection was too acceptable to be warmly contested, and therefore after a trifling debate a committee of twenty one persons was appointed in each house to examine and report the sentiments of the royal physicians. The report of the committee was laid upon the table of the house of commons on the tenth of December, when a motion was made by Mr. Pitt, for the appointment of another committee to inspect the journals for precedents of such proceedings as had been adopted in former instances when the sovereign authority was suspended by sickness, infirmity, or any other cause. Mr. Fox perceiving the minister's design, opposed with energy the present motion as calculated only for delay. " With respect to precedents, there were" he said, " notoriously none which applied to the present instance ; and he affirmed, that all that was requisite to their ultimate decision had been obtained by the report now lying upon their table. By that report they had ascertained the incapacity of the sovereign : and he advanced as a proposition deducible from the principles of the constitution, and the analogy of the law of hereditary succession, that whenever the sovereign was incapable of exercising the functions of his high office, the heir apparent, if of full age and capacity, had as indisputable a claim to the exercise of the executive authority, in the name and on the behalf of the sovereign, during his incapacity, as in the case of his natural demise." Mr. Pitt, eager to seize any occasion of postponing, by the intervention of extraneous questions, the ultimate decision, immediately rose with much apparent warmth, and declared, " that the assertion which had been made by Mr. Fox was little short of *reason* against the constitution ; and he pledged himself to prove, that the heir apparent in the instance in question, had no more right to the exercise of the executive

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power than any other person; and that it belonged entirely to the two remaining branches of the legislature, to make such a provision for supplying the temporary deficiency as they might think proper. When the regular exercise of the powers of government was from any cause suspended, to whom could the right of providing a remedy for the existing defect devolve, but to the people, from whom all the powers of government originated? To assert an inherent right in the prince of Wales to assume the government, was virtually to revive those exploded ideas of the divine and indefeasible authority of princes, which had so justly sunk into contempt, and almost into oblivion. Kings and princes derive their power from the people, and to the people alone, through the organ of their representatives, did it appertain to decide in cases for which the constitution had made no specific or positive provision."

XLVI. Thus was this famous political question at issue between these two great political rivals; in which it was remarkable that Mr. Fox, the steady, uniform, and powerful advocate of the people, appeared to lean to prerogative; and Mr. Pitt, who had been loudly and justly accused of deserting the principles of liberty, stood forth their intrepid and zealous asserter. All those popular arguments and primary axioms of government, on which the friends of freedom delight to dwell, were upon this occasion urged by Mr. Pitt with energy and eloquence. All this however was idle declamation, because extraneous to the subject. The primary principles of government formed no part of the present controversy. The question was simply, whether in the appointment of a regent, to supply a defect in the executive power, admitted to be occasioned by a new case, where they have neither precedent nor authority to guide their decision, they were to exercise a judicial or an elective authority? If the former, the business was at an end; for they must necessarily adjudge the regency to the prince. But if they were to exercise an arbitrary elective power, Mr. Pitt might make himself the competitor of the prince of

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Wales. This however never was intended, and it is probable that the patriotic declarations of the minister were made with no other view than that of gaining time, by embarrassing his adversary : or if he was sincere on this occasion, his sentiments, as will appear in the sequel, have since that period undergone an entire revolution.

XLVII. The motion of Mr. Pitt for a committee to examine precedents being carried in the commons, a similar motion was the next day made by lord Camden in the house of peers, and the doctrine of Mr. Fox reprobated by his lordship with great severity. It was on the other hand defended with much ability by lord Loughborough and lord Stormont; the latter of whom concluded his speech with recommending an immediate address to the prince of Wales, entreating him to assume the exercise of the royal authority. The discussion of the abstract question of right having afforded a great and unexpected advantage to the ministry, the duke of York, soon after this debate, in the name of the prince, expressed his wishes, "that the question might be waved. No claim of right," his highness said, "had been advanced by the prince of Wales; and he was confident that his brother too well understood the sacred principles which seated the house of Brunswick upon the throne, ever to assume or exercise any power, be his claim what it might, that was not derived from the will of the people expressed by their representatives." The duke of Gloucester confirmed the declaration of the duke of York. Lord Thurlow, who had at first consented to take a part in the regency administration, in the arrangement of which the post of lord president had been assigned to him, now varying the course of his policy, spoke with great energy of his "sentiments of affection towards the king. Nothing could be more disgraceful than to desert the sovereign in his distressed and helpless situation. His own debt of gratitude for favors received was ample, when he forgot his king, might God forget him." This pathetic and loyal exclamation, not being perhaps in perfect unison with the acceptance of a place in the new administration, it

was rumoured to be the result of certain intimations which his lordship recently received of the happy and not very distant prospect of the king's recovery. This was however as yet a matter of anxious and doubtful speculation.

XLVIII. On the sixteenth of December, the house being in a committee on the state of the nation, Mr. Pitt moved the two following declaratory resolutions; first, the interruption of the royal authority; and, second, that it was the duty of parliament to provide the means of supplying that defect. A vehement debate ensued, in the course of which Mr. Fox declared the principles of the minister to be, that the monarchy was indeed hereditary, but that the executive power ought to be elective: the legal metaphysics, that thus distinguished between the crown and its functions, were to him unintelligible. The investigators should be schoolmen, and not statesmen, if a question that so deeply involved the existence of the constitution were to be thus discussed.—“Where,” said he, “is that famous *dictum* to be found by which the crown is guarded with inviolable sanctity, while its *powers* are left to the mercy of every assailant? The prince, it is asserted, has no more right than another person, and at the same time it is acknowledged that parliament is not at liberty to think of any other regent; and all this paradoxical absurdity for the paltry triumph of a vote over a political antagonist.” The resolution was however, on a division, carried by 268 against 204 voices. This great point being gained, the ministry proceeded without delay to convert it to their own advantage.

XLIX. A third resolution passed, on the twenty third of December, empowering the chancellor of Great Britain to affix the great seal to such bill of limitations as might be necessary to restrict the power of the future regent. This mode of procedure was warmly opposed by lord North. “A person,” said his lordship, “is to be set up without power or discretion, and this pageant, this fictitious being, is to give the force of a law to the decis-

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sions of the two houses. Was it ever before heard of, that there could be a power of giving assent without the power of refusing that assent? Would any man seriously maintain that the third estate, thus conjured up, is really distinct from the other two?" Mr. Dempster moved an amendment, "that the prince of Wales be requested to take upon himself the administration of the government during the royal incapacity." On the division the amendment was negatived by 251 to 178 voices.

1789. L. On the second of January 1789, to complete the singularity and perplexity of the business, died Mr. Cornwall, speaker of the house of commons; and on the fifth the vacant chair was filled by Mr. Grenville, brother to lord Temple, and though there were a striking irregularity in entering upon the duties of his office without the previous sanction of royal approbation, yet in this season of novelties, a defect of this sort was scarcely noticed, amid the pressure of affairs so much more important.

LI. In consequence of some difference of opinion among the royal physicians respecting the state of his majesty's health, Mr. Loveden made a motion for a fresh committee to re-examine the physicians on the subject of the king's illness, and the probability of recovery. This motion having been acceded to, gave rise to a second report, which left the house, with regard to the event, as much in the dark as ever, answering no other purpose than to create delay, of which the minister well knew the value and advantage. A letter was however at length written to the prince of Wales by Mr. Pitt, informing his royal highness of the plan meant to be pursued: that the care of the king's person and the disposition of the royal household should be committed to the queen, who would by this means be vested with the patronage of four hundred places, amongst which were the great offices of lord steward, lord chamberlain, and the master of the horse. That the power of the prince should not extend to the granting any office, reversion, or pension, for any other term than during the king's pleasure, nor to the

conferring any peerage. The answer of the prince was firm, dignified, and temperate. He said, "it was with deep regret, that he perceived in the propositions of administration, a project for introducing weakness, disorder, and insecurity into every branch of political business;—for separating the court from the state, and depriving government of its natural and accustomed support; a scheme for disconnecting authority to command service, from the power of animating it by reward; and for allotting to him all the invidious duties of the kingly station, without the means of softening them to the public by any one act of grace, favor, or benig- nity." He observed, that the plea of public utility must be strong, manifest, and urgent, that could thus require the extinction or suspension of any of those essential rights in the supreme power or its representative, or which could justify the prince in consenting, that in his person an experiment should be made to ascertain with how small a portion of kingly power the executive government of this country could be conducted. In fine, the prince declared, that his conviction of the evils which might otherwise arise, out-weighed in his mind every other consideration, and would determine him to undertake the painful trust imposed upon him by that melancholy necessity, which of all the king's subjects he deplored the most.

LII. The bill intended to carry into effect this wild and dangerous project, the offspring of party interest, and personal ambition, was brought into the house on the fourteenth of January 1789. Long and violent debates ensued; and in the house of lords, it was accompanied by a protest, signed by the duke of York, at the head of the princes of the blood, and fifty-five other peers, expressive of their highest indignation at the restrictions thus arbitrarily imposed on the executive authority. These extraordinary and unprecedented proceedings were at length happily for the public, arrested in their progress by an intimation from the chancellor, that the king was declared by his physicians to be in a state of convalescence. The

was followed by a declaration on the tenth of March, that his majesty being perfectly recovered from his indisposition, had ordered a commission to be issued for holding the parliament in the usual manner. The tidings of the king's recovery diffused the most general and heartfelt satisfaction. A national thanksgiving was appointed, and the king himself went in solemn procession to the cathedral of St. Paul's, to offer up to the Almighty his grateful devotions on this event. His recovery was also celebrated throughout the kingdom by splendid illuminations, and all the other accustomed demonstrations of joy.

LIII. In the speech delivered by the chancellor in the name of the king to the two houses, his majesty conveyed to them his warmest acknowledgments for the additional proofs they had given of attachment to his person, of their concern for the honor and interests of his crown, and the security and good government of his dominions. It very soon appeared that the last proceedings of the ministry in the regency business were highly agreeable to the sovereign. A number of persons holding posts under the government, who had concurred in the measures of opposition, were unceremoniously dismissed from their offices; amongst whom were the marquis of Lothian, the duke of Queensbury, lord Carteret, and lord Malmsbury.

LIV. One of the earliest topics that engaged the attention of parliament was the unpopular shop tax. Mr. Fox renewed his annual motion for its repeal, to which Mr. Pitt did not choose any longer to withhold his assent, though at the same time he affirmed he had heard nothing in the shape of argument which induced him to change his original opinion. He accordingly moved an omission of that part of the preamble to the bill of repeal, by which the tax was pronounced a partial and oppressive imposition, militating against the just principles of taxation.—Encouraged by the success of this application, Mr. Dempster immediately moved for the repeal of the hawker's and pedlar's tax. This, however, could not be obtained; but a bill passed to explain and amend the act, by which the more oppressive clauses were mitigated, and these friends

less and injured people restored in some measure to their civil and commercial rights.

LV. On the eighth of May, Mr. Beaufoy introduced the motion which he had two years before submitted to the house, for the repeal of the corporation and test acts. He observed on this occasion, that the unalterable confidence, which the dissenters reposed in the disposition of the house to do justice to the injured, and afford relief to the oppressed, had induced them to renew their application to parliament. They were perfectly convinced how difficult it was even for the best and wisest men to relinquish, upon the evidence of a single debate, the prejudice which misinformation had led them to adopt; and they could not forget how frequently the legislature had granted the requests which causeless alarms had at first induced them to refuse. Mr. Fox supported the motion with uncommon force of argument. He laid it down as a primary axiom of policy, "that no human government had jurisdiction over opinions as such, and more particularly over religious opinions. It had no right to presume that it knew them, and much less to act upon that presumption. When opinions were productive of acts injurious to society, the law knew how and where to apply the remedy. If the reverse of this doctrine were adopted, if the actions of men were to be prejudged from their opinions, it would sow the seeds of everlasting jealousy and distrust; it would give the most unlimited scope to the malignant passions; it would incite each man to divine the opinions of his neighbour, to deduce mischievous consequences from them, and then to prove that he ought to incur disabilities, to be fettered with restrictions, to be harrassed with penalties. From this intolerant principle had flowed every species of party zeal, every system of political persecution, every extravagance of religious hate. It was an irreverent and impious opinion to maintain, that the church must depend for support as an engine or ally of the state, and not on the evidence of its doctrines, and the excellency of their moral effects. Moderation and indulgence to other sects

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were equally conducive to the happiness of mankind and the safety of the church. Since the æra of the revolution the church had flourished, because her imaginary fears had been dissipated. She had improved in knowledge and candor, because, instead of being able to impose silence on the dissenters by the strong hand of power, she had been obliged to hear their arguments; and the community at large has found the happy effects, which a collision of opinions in open and liberal discussion, among men living under the same government, never fails to produce. There were many men not of the establishment, to whose services their country had a claim. Surely a citizen of this description might be permitted without danger or absurdity to say;—Though I dissent from the church, I am a friend to the constitution; and on religious subjects I am entitled to think and act as I please. Ought the country to be deprived of the benefit she might derive from the talents of such men, and his majesty be prevented from dispensing the favors of the crown except to one description of his subjects? Mr. Fox declared himself a friend to an establishment of religion in every country, framed agreeably to the sentiments of the majority of its inhabitants. But to invest that establishment with a monopoly of civil and religious privileges, was palpably unjust, and remote from the purpose of an establishment, which was no otherwise connected with the state, than as it tended to promote morality and good order among the people. The test and corporation acts subsisted, it was contended, for more than a century. True; but how had they subsisted? by repeated suspensions. For the indemnity bills were, literally speaking, annual acts. Where then would be the impropriety of suspending them for ever by an act of perpetual operation? Let not Great Britain be the last to avail herself of the general improvement of the human understanding. Indulgence to other sects, a candid respect for their opinions, a desire to promote charity and good-will, were the best proofs that any religion could give of its divine origin." Such are the noble and exalted sentiments which have

have long elevated Mr. Fox to the rank of the first statesman of his age and country. Mr. Pitt in an artificial harangue delivered with a great external shew of candour, and decorated with a speciousness of language, opposed the motion. On a division the numbers were, ayes 104, noes 124, so that this important question was lost by a majority of only twenty voices.

LVI. Mr. Wilberforce at an advanced period of the session, brought forward his long expected motion, relating to the abolition of the African slave trade, which was now become the theme of public execration. Mr. Wilberforce divided his subject into three parts—the nature of the trade as it affected Africa itself; the appearance it assumed in the transportation of the slaves; and the considerations suggested by their actual state in the West Indies. “What,” he asked, “must be the natural consequence of a slave trade with Africa, with a country vast in its extent, not utterly barbarous, but civilized in a very small degree? Was it not plain that she must suffer from it? that her savage manners must be rendered still more ferocious, and that a slave trade carried on round her coasts, must extend violence and desolation to her very centre? Such were precisely the circumstances proved by the evidence before the privy council. As to the mode in which the slaves were transported from Africa to the West Indies, he affirmed that a much misery condensed into so small a compass, was more than human imagination had ever before conceived. It was the constant practice to set sail in the night, the slaves, wrung with distress at quitting for ever their native country, might not be sensible of the moment of departure. This dreadful event was marked with songs and tears of lamentation. It appeared in evidence, that a captain more susceptible than the rest, threatened a woman with a flogging, because the mournfulness of her songs was too painful for his feelings. The mortality on board the ships was prodigious; and including the subsequent *seasoning*, it did not amount to less than fifty per cent. On their arrival in the West Indies, afflic-

agents and washes were employed to hide their wounds and *make them up for sale*. This infamous traffic was also known to be the grave of sailors employed in it. Of 170 seamen who sailed from Liverpool in 1787, only 428 had returned. Mr. Wilberforce said he felt the wickedness of the slave trade to be so enormous, so dreadful, so irremediable, that he could stop at no alternative short of its abolition. He acknowledged that his mind had indeed been harassed with the objections of the West India planters, who had asserted that the ruin of their property must be the consequence of this measure. He could not, however, help distrusting their arguments. He could not believe that the almighty Being, who forbade the practice of rapine and blood, had made rapine and bloodshed necessary to any part of his creation. Light soon broke in upon his mind. His suspicions were confirmed by daily information, and the evidence he had now to offer upon this point was decisive and complete. The principle upon which he founded the necessity of the act, was not indeed policy, but justice; but though justice were the principle of the measure, he would pledge himself to prove it reconcileable with our truest political interest." Mr. Wilberforce concluded a long and excellent speech, equally addressed to the understanding and the feelings of the house, by moving twelve propositions, specifying the number of slaves imported from Africa into the British West Indies; the different descriptions of persons included in this aggregate number; the injury sustained by the seamen employed in the African trade; the causes of the mortality of the negroes; and the different *items* of calculation respecting the increase of population in Jamaica and Barbadoes. Upon these propositions, Mr. Wilberforce said he did not mean to urge the house to come to any immediate vote. This forbearance furnished to the anti-abolitionists an occasion for the introduction of new difficulties, which they eagerly seized in order to gain the main point, of delay. Lord Penryn, one of the members included under this denomination, perceiving that the sense of the

the nation was decidedly in favour of the abolition, and alarmed at the support the ministry gave to the measure, as well as the reception it met with in the house; asserted in the course of this debate, "that to his knowledge the planters were now willing to assent to any regulation of the trade, short of its abolition." In reply to this remark, Mr. Fox, with great animation declared, "that he knew of no such thing, as a *regulation of robbery and restriction of murder*. There was no medium: the legislature must either abolish the trade, or plead guilty to the iniquity with which it was attended. This was a traffic which no government could authorise, without participation in the infamy." Evidence being brought at the bar of the house for several successive weeks, it was at length on the twenty third of June, moved by Mr. alderman Newnham, "that the farther consideration of the subject be deferred to the next session," which was accordingly carried.

LVII. The session was terminated August the eleventh 1789, by a speech from the lord chancellor in the name of the sovereign; in which it was observed that although the good offices of the king and his allies had not been effectual for the restoration of general tranquillity, the situation of affairs promised to this country the uninterrupted enjoyment of the blessings of peace." The recent events which had taken place in the different nations of Europe, rendered an assurance like this, at such an eventful period, peculiarly grateful. A war had been kindled which gradually spread from the Euxine to the Baltic; from the snow-clad mountains of Norway to the arid wastes of Tartary: and the foundation of a great and stupendous revolution had been laid, which, by a sudden and almost miraculous expansion, became at once an object of admiration and terror, to a gazing and astonished world.

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ect. IV. *The artful Silence of the Minister on French Affairs, contrasted with his decided Opposition to the Disfranchisers.* V. *Motion for a Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.* VI. *Opposed by Mr. Pitt.—Unsuccessful.* VII. *A Reform in Parliament moved by Mr. Flood.* VIII. *The Motion violently opposed—and withdrawn.* IX. *The Slave Trade.* X. *Remarks on the Length of Mr. Hastings's Trial.* XI. *The State of our Settlements in India.* XII. *Royal Message announces a Rupture with Spain.—Grounds of the Quarrel.* XIII. *The Court of Madrid offer to submit their Claims to Arbitration.* XIV. *The House of Commons pass a Vote of Credit.—Great Military and Naval Preparations.* XV. *Parliament dissolved.* XVI. *Spain applies to the Court of France.—The French unwilling to engage in Hostilities with England.* XVII. *The Dispute settled, and a Convention signed at the Escurial.* XVIII. *War commenced in India.—Statement of its Origin.* XIX. *The Meeting of the New Parliament.* XX. *The Convention with Spain examined by the Commons.* XXI. *By the Lords.* XXII. *Statement of the Expences of the Spanish Armament.—The Minister proposes seizing the unclaimed Dividends in the Bank.—Violently opposed.—Compromised.* XXIII. *The Question whether Impeachments abate or not by a Dissolution of Parliament? Decided in the negative.* XXIV. *Motion for shortening the Trial of Mr. Hastings.* XXV. *The Lords concur with the Commons on the Question of Abatement by Dissolution.* XXVI. *Bill in Favor of the Catholics passed.* XXVII. *Bill for settling the Rights of Juries in Cases of Libel.—Passes the Commons.—Postponed by the Lords.* XXVIII. *The Slave Trade.—The Question of Abolition negatived.* XXIX. *The Establishment of the Sierra Leona Company.* XXX. *Bill for the better Government of Canada.* XXXI. *Opposed by Mr. Fox.* XXXII. *Mr. Burke's furious Invective against the French Revolution.—Answered by Mr. Fox.—Terminates in a Breach of Friendship, and a final Separation in Politics.* XXXIII. *Rupture with Russia.—Grounds of the Quarrel.* XXXIV. *Royal Message on this Subject.* XXXV. *Address of Thanks carried after a violent Opposition.*

position. XXXVI. *Our Interference with Russia brought a second Time before the Commons.—The Minority greatly increased.* XXXVII. *The Parliament prorogued.* XXXVIII. *The French Revolution divides the Nation into Parties.* XXXIX. *Associations formed to Celebrate that Event on the Fourteenth of July.* XL. *The Causes of the Political Animosities at Birmingham.* XLI. *The Town thrown into a Ferment by an inflammatory and seditious Hand-bill.* XLII. *The Meeting on the Fourteenth of July of the Friends of the Revolution.—Dispersed by the Mob.* XLIII. *The same Evening Dr. Priestley's House—Meeting-house, &c. destroyed.* XLIV. *Depredations committed on the Fifteenth.* XLV. *Continued.* XLVI. *On the Sixteenth.* XLVII. *Arrival of the Military.—Mob dispersed.* XLVIII. *General Reflections.*

I. **W**HILE the summer of the year 1789 passed away in England without producing any memorable transaction, it proved a period fruitful of commotion on the continent, and will be distinguished to the latest posterity as the epoch of the French revolution. On the fourteenth of July a most tremendous insurrection took place at Paris, in which the castle of the Bastile, a fortress long but vainly deemed impregnable, was carried by storm. This great and astonishing event, being justly viewed as the triumph of liberty over despotism, was the theme of general exultation to the friends of humanity in every quarter of the world. Englishmen, particularly alive to the blessings of freedom themselves, partook by a generous sympathy in the patriotic struggles of France. The grand and sublime spectacle of twenty six millions of our fellow creatures indignantly spurning at slavery, and obtaining liberty by the exertions of an irresistible and noble enthusiasm, not only arrested the attention of all nations, but so deeply interested the feelings of the English public, that in the metropolis, and in different parts of the kingdom, this amazing revolution was celebrated with demonstrations of joy. The details of these transactions belong properly to a subsequent period, and are only alluded to here, as an introduction to some parliamentary

mentary occurrences, about to be noticed, and which have an immediate reference to the affairs of France.

1790. II. The parliament elected in 1784, met for its last session on the twenty first of January 1790. In the speech from the throne, his majesty slightly glanced at the affairs of France, by observing, that "the internal situation of the different parts of Europe had been productive of events which had engaged his most serious attention." Lord Valletort, in moving the address, took occasion to contrast the tranquil and prosperous situation of England with the anarchy and licentiousness of France, and to stigmatize the revolution in that country as an event the most disastrous and fatal to the interests of the French which had ever taken place since the foundation of their monarchy. This language was highly applauded by the old prerogative phalanx, and was a tolerable indication of the light in which the recent transactions in France were viewed by the British court. The subject was resumed, upon the debate which took place on February the ninth relative to the army estimates. On this occasion, Mr. Burke, to shew the propriety of a reduction of the peace establishment, delivered his first *Philippic* against France. He observed, "that on a review of all Europe, he did not find that politically we stood in the smallest degree of danger from any one state or kingdom it contained, nor that any foreign powers, but our own allies, were likely to gain a preponderance in the scale. France has hitherto been our first object," said Mr. Burke, "in all considerations concerning the balance of power. But France is in a political light to be considered as expunged out of the system of Europe. Whether she would ever appear in it again as a leading power was not easy to determine: but at present he considered France as not politically existing; and most assuredly it would take much time to restore her to her former active existence. He was astonished at it. He was alarmed at it. He trembled at the uncertainty of all human greatness. The French had shewn themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had hitherto appeared in the world. In one short summer

they had completely pulled down their monarchy, their church, their nobility, their law, their army, and their revenue. Were we absolute conquerors, and France to lie prostrate at our feet, we should blush to impose upon them terms so destructive to all their consequence as a nation, as the durance they had imposed upon themselves. In the last age we were in danger of being entangled by the example of France in the net of a relentless despotism, a despotism indeed proudly arrayed in manners, gallantry, splendor, magnificence, and even covered over with the imposing robes of science and literature. Our present danger, from the example of a people whose character knows no medium, is, with regard to government, a danger from licentious violence—a danger of being led from admiration to imitation of the excesses of an unprincipled, plundering, ferocious, bloody, and tyrannical democracy—of a people whose government is anarchy, and whose religion is atheism. The French nation were very unwise. What they valued themselves upon was, in his opinion, a disgrace to them. They had gloried, and some people in England had thought fit to take share in that glory, in making a revolution. All the horrors and all the crimes of the anarchy which led to this revolution, which attend its progress, and which may eventually result from its establishment, pass for nothing.—The French have made their way through the destruction of their country to a bad constitution, when they were absolutely in possession of a good one. Instead of redressing grievances, and improving the fabric of their state to which they were called by their monarch, and sent by their country, they had rashly destroyed all the balances and counterpoises which serve to fix the state, and to give it a steady direction. These they had melted down into one incongruous, ill-connected mass; and, with the most atrocious perfidy and violation of all faith among men, laid the axe to the root of all property, and consequently of all national prosperity, by the principles they established, and the example they set in confiscating all the possessions of the church. They had made and recorded a set

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of institute and digest of anarchy, called A DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN: thus systematically destroying every hold of authority by opinion, religious or civil, on the minds of the people. By this *mad declaration* they had subverted the state, and brought on such calamities as no country without a long war, had ever been known to suffer. He declared he felt great concern that this strange thing, called a revolution in France, should be compared with the glorious event commonly called the revolution in England. In truth, the circumstances of our revolution, as it is called, and that of France, are just the reverse of each other in almost every particular, and in the whole spirit of the transaction. What we did was, in truth and substance, not a revolution made, but prevented. We took solid securities; we settled doubtful questions; we corrected anomalies in our law. In the stable fundamental parts of our constitution we made no revolution;—no, nor any alteration at all. We did not impair the monarchy. The nation kept the same ranks, the same subordinations, the same franchises; the same order in the law, the revenue, and the magistracy; the same lords, the same commons, the same corporations, the same electors. The church was not impaired. Her estates, her majesty, her splendor, her orders and gradations continued the same. She was preserved in her full efficiency, and cleared only of that intolerance which was her weakness and disgrace. Was little done then, because a revolution was not made in her constitution? No—every thing was done; because she commenced with reparation, not with ruin. Instead of lying in a sort of epileptic trance, exposed to the pity and derision of the world for her wild, ridiculous, convulsive movements, the state flourished; Great Britain rose above the standard of her former self. All the energies of the country were awakened, and a new era of prosperity commenced, which still continues, not only unimpaired, but receiving growth and improvement under the wasting hand of time."

III. Mr. Fox, notwithstanding his personal regard

and friendship for Mr. Burke, thought it necessary, in justice to the rectitude and dignity of his own character, to declare "his total dissent from opinions so hostile to the general principles of liberty; and which he was grieved to hear from the lips of a man whom he loved and revered—by whose precepts he had been taught, by whose example he had been animated to engage in their defence. He vindicated the conduct of the French army, in refusing to act against their fellow citizens from the aspersions of Mr. Burke, who had charged them with abetting an abominable sedition by mutiny and desertion; declaring that, if he could view a standing military force with less constitutional jealousy than before, it was owing to the noble spirit manifested by the French army; who, on becoming soldiers, had proved that they did not forsake their character as citizens, and would not act as the mere instruments of a despot. The scenes of bloodshed and cruelty that had been acted in France, no man," said Mr. Fox, "could hear of without lamenting. But when the grievous tyranny that the people had so long groaned under was considered, the excesses they had committed in their efforts to shake off the yoke could not excite our astonishment so much as our regret. And as to the contrast Mr. Burke had exhibited, respecting the mode in which the two revolutions of England and France were conducted, it must be remembered, that the situation of the two kingdoms was totally different. In France, a new constitution was to be created. In England, it wanted only to be secured. If the fabric of government in England suffered less alteration, it was because it required less alteration. If a general destruction of the ancient constitution had taken place in France, it was because the whole system was radically hostile to liberty, and that every part of it breathed the direful spirit of despotism." Mr. Sheridan, with still less reserve and attention to personal respect, reprobated the political sentiments which had been advanced by Mr. Burke. "The people of France," said Mr. Sheridan, "it is true, have committed acts of barbarity and bloodshed which have justly excited indignation

indignation and abhorrence. He was as ready as Mr. Burke to detest the cruelties that had been committed; but what was the striking lesson, the awful moral, that these outrages taught? A deeper abhorrence of that system of despotic government, which had so deformed and corrupted human nature; of a species of government, that trampled upon the property, the liberty and lives of its subjects; that dealt in extortions, dungeons, and torture; and that prepared before hand a day of sanguinary vengeance, when the irritated populace should possess themselves of power. But whatever were these outrages, was the national assembly in any respect answerable for them, that assembly which had exerted a firmness and perseverance hitherto unexampled; that had secured the liberty of France, and vindicated the cause of mankind? Were the mad cruelties of a mob an adequate ground for branding the national assembly with the stigma of being a bloody, ferocious, and tyrannical democracy? It was a libel on that illustrious body thus to describe them. A better constitution than that which actually existed, it is allowed that France had a right to expect. From whom were they to receive it? From the bounty of the monarch at the head of his courtiers? or from the patriotism of marshal Broglie at the head of the army? From the faint and feeble cries emitted from the dark dungeons of the bastille? or from the influence and energy of that spirit which laid the bastille in ashes? The people, unhappily misguided, as they doubtless were, in particular instances, had however acted rightly in their great object. They had placed the supreme authority of the community in those hands by whom alone it could be justly exercised, and had reduced their sovereign to the rank which properly belonged to kings—that of administrator of the laws established by the free consent of the community.”

IV. This being the first time that the French revolution became a subject of parliamentary investigation, the house appeared, during a long and most interesting discussion, greatly agitated by the shock and conflict of clashing

clashing opinions: but Mr. Pitt preserved a cautious and politic silence as to the merits of the revolution, contenting himself for the present, with lavishly applauding Mr. Burke for the zealous and seasonable attachment he had displayed to the principles of the British constitution.—The spirit, however, by which the government was now actuated, appeared with less reserve in their conduct towards the dissenters. Since the very favorable and flattering decision of the last session, relative to the repeal of the test and corporation acts, the dissenters had made the most strenuous and unremitting efforts to increase their parliamentary friends. They had held provincial meetings in every part of the kingdom, and in their public resolutions, not only gave the most unequivocal proofs of their joy at the late events in France, but in contemplation of the approaching general election, recommended a preference in favor of such members as had shewn themselves friends and advocates of equal and universal liberty. In the stead of Mr. Beaufoy, a friend and partisan of the minister, Mr. Fox was now solicited to move the repeal of the acts in question, to which he gave a ready and generous assent. On the other hand, the clergy of the church of England were not idle. Jealous of every appearance of encroachment on their exclusive privileges, and alarmed at the precipitate downfall of the Gallican church, they revived with incredible success the obsolete and senseless clamor, that the CHURCH was in *danger*. Counter-meetings of the friends of the church were also every where convened, in which the repeal of the test was deprecated as fatal to its security and existence.—Such were the steps taken by the adverse parties, to impress the nation at large with an idea of the magnitude and importance of a question, which they had hitherto regarded with cool indifference.

V. On the second of March, Mr. Fox brought forward his motion of repeal, which he supported with a wonderful display of ability. He said, “that it was to him a matter of triumph, that the very people who had imputed to him designs hostile to liberty and subversive of the constitution,

constitution, had requested him to plead their cause on that day. This was at once a refutation and a reparation of the wrong they had done him. He said, he was himself a member of the established church, and thought an establishment, if not necessary, at least useful and advisable. And should any attempts be made to invade the rights of the church, she would find him as ready to stand forward the champion of those rights, as he was this day to plead those of the dissenters; and he hoped the time would come, when the church would see his conduct in its true light, and acquit him of any design upon her splendor, influence, or greatness. Persecution," said Mr. Fox, "is a bond of union. Remove the barriers which separate the dissenters from the community of citizens, and in their collective capacity they would be no longer known. Men unite to resist oppression: but cease to oppress and the union is dissolved. Continue it, and you render the union still more compact and firm, till resistance, at first perhaps weak, gradually becomes formidable, and finally successful. And experience shews, that when oppression has been carried to certain lengths, men think that the only way to destroy the oppression is to destroy the oppressor. Such is the tendency and such the termination of this wretched system of policy. For any government to extend its jurisdiction over the opinions of individuals," said this great statesman, "is at once absurd and tyrannical. It is absurd, for opinions must and ought to be free. They are not the proper objects of human authority, and they may in fact be perfectly innocent and harmless, when in a mere speculative view they perhaps appear fraught with mischief and danger. It is tyrannical, for it would furnish a pretext for every species of oppression and persecution. It is not to control opinions, but actions, that government is instituted. And then only has the state a right to interfere, when by an overt act a man has offended against any known law. Then, and then only, is punishment justly inflicted, when a man by his conduct has proved himself criminal; and not when it is inferred, from his opinions,

nions, that he may possibly become so. Such," said Mr. Fox, "is the absurdity of the laws in question, that the legislature has for many successive years regularly passed an act for indemnifying those who presume to serve their country at their own peril. To this miserable expedient are men driven, rather than repeal a law which they themselves blush to execute."

VI. Mr. Pitt, who had opposed the former applications with temper and moderation, now indulged some expressions of asperity. "Neither the merits nor demerits of individuals ought," he said, "to have any influence in the discussion of the present question; yet was the conduct of the dissenters liable to just reprehension, who, at the very moment they were reprobating the test laws, discovered an intention of forming associations throughout the country for the purpose of imposing a test upon the members of that house, and judging of their fitness to discharge their parliamentary duty from their votes upon this single occasion. He was far from wishing to throw any stigma upon the dissenters; but he affirmed it to be extremely probable that they might exercise the power they demanded for the subversion of the present establishment. The important question at issue," he asserted, "plainly was, whether the house ought to relinquish once those acts which had been adopted by the wisdom of our ancestors to serve as the bulwark to the church, whose constitution was so intimately connected with that of the state, that the safety of the one must be always affected by any danger that threatened the other. To the toleration the dissenters were undoubtedly entitled. They had a right to enjoy their liberty and their property, to entertain their own speculative opinions, and to educate their offspring in such religious sentiments as themselves approved. But the indispensable necessity of a permanent church establishment for the good of the state, required that toleration should not be extended to equality; if it were, there would be an end for ever to the wise policy of prevention, and a door would be opened to the absolute ruin of the constitution." Mr. Burke seconded

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the minister in a speech of far more virulence, and in pre-
sented circumstances therefore of far more efficacy. He ex-
pressed his utter contempt of "all abstract principles of na-
tural right; these," he said, "were annihilated by society,
which secured the possession of every comfort which those
proud and boastful rights impotently held out, but
could not bestow. He astonished and alarmed the house
with reading several passages from the writings of dissent-
ing divines on the subject of ecclesiastical establishments,
expressed with the usual acrimony and violence of theo-
logical polemics. From these testimonies Mr. Burke in-
ferred the inveterate enmity of the dissenters to the church,
and he adjured the house to suffer the fatal incidents
which had taken place in France, and the sudden ruin of
the Gallican church, to awaken their zeal for the pre-
servation of our present happy and excellent establish-
ment." On the division the numbers were, ayes 105,
noes 294; so that the majority against the repeal had
increased since the last session from 20 to 189 voices.

VII. Two days after the decision of the house upon
this business, Mr. Flood, so long celebrated as a patriot
and orator in the Irish house of commons, and who had
for some years almost undistinguished in the British se-
nate, moved for leave to bring in a bill upon the subject
of a more equal representation of the people in parliament.
Mr. Flood's proposition was, that one hundred members
should be added to the present house of commons, in a
proportional ratio to the population of each country, by
the election of the resident householders only. This was
a simple and eligible plan of reform, and it was support-
ed by the mover in a very able and eloquent speech. He
observed, "that he felt it necessary to state a bold truth,
which, but from a confidence in the virtue of the house,"
he said, "he should not have dared to have uttered—
that they were not the adequate representatives of the
people. That they were the legal representatives he free-
ly admitted; nay, he would go farther, and say, that
they were a highly useful and honorable council; a coun-
cil, which, in any other government of Europe, would
be

be a great acquisition. But, to the honor of our country be it spoken, the British constitution entitled us to something better. Representation," Mr. Flood said, "was the great arcanum and wise mystery of our government, by which it excelled all the states of antiquity. Now, in what did representation consist? In this, that as by the general law of political society the majority was to decide for the whole, the representative must be chosen by a body of constituents who were themselves a clear majority of the people. He admitted, that property to a certain degree was a necessary requisite to the elective power: that is to say, that franchise ought not to go beyond property, but at the same time it ought to be extended farther than at present. By the existing system these principles were grossly violated. The freeholders who originally included the whole property of the kingdom, now constituted only a small part of it. What was worse, the majority of the representatives, who decided for the whole, and acted for eight millions of people, were chosen by a number of electors not exceeding six or eight thousand. A new body of constituents was therefore wanting, and in their appointment two things were to be considered: one, that they should be numerous enough, because numbers were necessary to the spirit of liberty: the other, that they should have a competent share of property, because property was conducive to the spirit of order. But he was told this was not the time for a reform. And why? because there were disturbances in France. Now, with respect to this objection, he averred, that, if those disturbances were ten times greater than with every exaggeration they were represented to be, they would only render the argument more decisive in favor of a timely and temperate reform. It was for want of such a reform that these evils had fallen on France: it was to the want of similar measures, that the former convulsions of our own country were to be ascribed. Had the encroachment of the Tudors been seasonably repressed, Charles the first would not have mistaken those encroachments for a constitutional prerogative. Had the ma
practices

practices of Charles the second been less tamely endured, James might not have been a tyrant, and needed not have been an exile. Mr. Flood was no friend to revolutions, because they were an evil; he was a friend to timely reform, which rendered revolutions unnecessary. Those who opposed such a reform, might be enemies to revolution in their hearts, but were friends to it by their folly. Let the representative be chosen as he ought to be by the people, and continue to act worthy of that choice, and Britain would have nothing to dread from the example of France.

VIII. This motion was vehemently opposed by Mr. Windham, the obsequious and devoted disciple of Mr. Burke, who adopted in their full extent all his foibles and eccentricities, but who followed him in his superior lines of character, his genius, and his eloquence, at an humble distance indeed. "At the close of the American war," Mr. Windham said, "a deluge of opinions had been let loose, a clamor had been raised, and a parliamentary reform demanded, as a remedy for the evils we felt from it. Happily those wild notions had long since subsided; the danger, however, was now breaking out afresh; and were he otherwise a friend to the proposition, he should have objected to it on account of the time at which it was introduced. Where was the man who would be mad enough to advise them to repair their house in the hurricane season?" Mr. Pitt entirely coincided in these reasonings of Mr. Windham, and declared, "that were the motion before them the precise proposition he himself had formerly offered, he should now vote against it from a complete conviction of its actual impropriety. But at a more seasonable opportunity he would *most certainly* again submit his ideas upon the subject to the consideration of the house." Mr. Fox declared he saw no reason why we should be struck with a panic on account of the situation of affairs in France; and in allusion to Mr. Windham's metaphorical argument, he affirmed, "that no season could be more proper to begin a repair than when a hurricane was near, and ready to burst forth."

Mr. Flood perceiving the general sense of the house even of those members who had formerly favoured the idea of a parliamentary reform, to be adverse to his motion, at length assented to withdraw it.

IX. The business relative to the abolition of the slave trade advanced very slowly indeed. Every artifice of procrastination was used on the part of the slave merchants and planters, and the whole session passed over in the hearing of evidence and examination of witnesses. This dilatory mode of conducting the enquiry afforded to the anti-abolitionists abundant leisure to recruit their strength, an advantage of which they had so successfully availed themselves, that upon the revival of sir William Dolben's bill for limiting the number of slaves to be transported in each slave ship, they ventured to propose as an amendment, to increase the number of slaves in proportion to the tonnage of ships, without regarding the extent of their superficies. This proposition, which entirely destroyed the humane regulations of the bill, they were, by an accession of numbers, able to carry by a majority of five. Such however was the alarm excited by this unexpected and disgraceful decision, that to the honor of parliament, of the nation and humanity, the amendment was rejected upon the report on the following day by a full house.

X. The session of parliament was already drawing to its close, when on the eleventh of May Mr. Burke offered a motion to the consideration of the house of commons relative to the trial of Mr. Hastings. This trial had now continued for three years, a circumstance altogether unprecedented in any criminal prosecution in this or perhaps any other country. A part of this delay was no doubt owing to the nature of the subject, the distance at which the transactions had taken place, the difficulty in such a case of establishing facts by regular evidence and the articles of impeachment, comprehending the public administration of India for a series of years. But these considerations were still insufficient to justify the extraordinary length of time already occupied in the trial.

Proceeding

Proceeding with the same tardy pace, it was highly probable, that both judges and witnesses, accusers and accused, would be swept by time off the stage of life, before the trial could arrive at its final termination. On this account, the resentment originally awakened against the delinquent had gradually subsided into compassion for the man, whom the public now looked upon as the object of a relentless persecution. It was scarcely possible for the most enlightened of mankind to form any just opinion of a cause, the real merits of which were obscured in the immensity of the detail. But whether the guilt or innocence of the accused should be ultimately established, the time and expence attendant on this mode of conducting trial by impeachment rendered it extremely doubtful whether ever the nation could be brought to make a similar attempt; and therefore at any rate the prosecution was almost certain to fail, in effecting the great and exemplary ends of substantial justice. The friends of Mr. Hastings asserted, that in this business Westminster hall had been converted into a school of eloquence, and that the managers had greatly protracted the trial by the length of their speeches. Whatever truth there may be in this, certain it is, the house of commons originally proposed, that the lords should decide separately upon each article, which would doubtless have shortened the proceedings, but which proposition their lordships rejected. It is also to be observed, that the court sat only thirteen days on the trial during the whole course of the last session; and as the managers had no authority to regulate the sittings of the lords, they possessed but little power to facilitate the progress of the business. To put however the trial in such a train as would insure its conclusion in a reasonable time, Mr. Burke now moved, "That the house do authorize the managers to insist only upon such and so many of the charges as may appear to them conducive to the obtaining speedy and effectual justice."

XI. Mr. Dundas on the thirty first of March 1790, brought forward his annual statement of the debts and revenues of the East India company. He described, as

usual, their situation to be in the highest degree prosperous and flourishing, and offered to the house a new proof of the truth of his assertions, by concluding his eulogium, without asking a loan to enable them to avoid the horrors of insolvency. Through the wise and equitable administration of lord Cornwallis, the revenues of Bengal had been advanced during the last year, without the aid of any new imposition, from one million eight hundred thousand pounds to two millions one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. His lordship, on his accession to the high office of governor general had stated the situation of the provinces as most wretched and deplorable. In his dispatch to the court of directors, dated August 2, 1789, he says, "Independent of all other considerations, it will be of the utmost importance for promoting the solid interests of the company, that the principal landholders and traders in the interior parts of the country should be restored to such circumstances as to enable them to support their families with decency, according to the customs of the several casts and religions. I am sorry to be obliged to say, that agriculture and internal commerce have for many years been gradually declining; and that at present, excepting the clans of Shroffs and Banians, who reside almost entirely in great towns, the inhabitants of the provinces were advancing hastily to a general state of poverty and wretchedness. In this description I must include almost every zemindar in the company's territories. And in his council minute of September 18, 1789, his lordship writes, "I can safely assert, that one third of the company's territory is now a jungle inhabited by wild beasts!" One of the first and most important measures of the new governor general was to lease the lands in perpetuity at an equal valuation to the actual occupants, and in alluding to this part of his conduct, his lordship thus forcibly expresses himself to the directors. "The security of property, and the certainty which each individual will now feel of being allowed to enjoy the fruit of his labours, must operate uniformly as incitements to labour and industry." This description cannot be con-

strued into an encomium on the character of his predecessor, but appears very strongly to justify his accusers in the heavy charges they have advanced against his government.

XII. On the nineteenth of April, Mr. Pitt presented to the house his annual statement of the national revenue and expenditure. He expressed a peculiar degree of pleasure in being able to announce, that the receipt of the exchequer had surpassed that of the year preceding in the sum of half a million; and he rejoiced, that, from the prospect of an uninterrupted enjoyment of the blessings of peace, still greater accessions might reasonably be hoped. Before however the public had time to partake of the minister's joy, from the consolatory intimations of national peace and prosperity, he was commissioned to deliver to the house, May the fifth, a royal message of a very different import, and which excited inexpressible astonishment, by announcing a state of things which bore the undisguised and dreadful aspect of war. To elucidate this matter, it is necessary to mention that the celebrated circumnavigator Cook, in his last voyage of discovery, touching at different ports on the Western coast of North America, purchased from the natives a number of valuable furs bearing a high price in the Chinese market. In consequence of its being likely to prove a lucrative branch of commerce, a small association of British merchants, resident in the East Indies, formed the project of opening a trade to this part of the world for the purpose of supplying the Chinese with furs. Accordingly, in the year 1788, a spot of ground was procured from the Indians, and a regular settlement, defended by a slight fortification, established at Nootka Sound, situated about the 50th degree of latitude. This being regarded by the Spaniards as a flagrant encroachment on their exclusive rights of sovereignty, the *Princesa*, a Spanish frigate of twenty-six guns, was dispatched by the viceroy of Mexico, and in May 1789, seized upon the fort, and captured the *Nigenia*, and *Argonaut*, two English vessels then trading on the coast. At the same time, the Spanish com-

mandant, hoisting the national standard, declared that the whole line of coast from Cape Horn to the 60th degree of latitude belonged to the king of Spain. After some delay and considerable loss to the proprietors, the captured vessels were restored by order of the viceroy, on the supposition, as he stated, "that nothing but ignorance of the rights of Spain could have induced the merchants in question to attempt an establishment on that coast." This transaction was notified to the court of London so long since as the tenth of February by the Spanish ambassador; and his excellency at the same time requested, "that measures might be taken for preventing his Britannic majesty's subjects from frequenting those coasts, and from carrying on their fisheries in the seas contiguous to the Spanish continent, and derogatory to the incontestible rights of the crown of Spain."

XIII. The English minister did not receive this communication in a manner that indicated any disposition to comply with the terms it contained. On the contrary, a demand was immediately advanced on their part, that the vessels seized should be restored and adequate satisfaction granted previous to any other discussion. The claims of Spain, in relation to her rights of dominion and sovereignty in America were doubtless in the highest degree chimerical; and could perhaps only be equalled in extravagance by the claims of Great Britain. By the treaty of 1763, the river Mississippi, flowing in a direct course of fifteen hundred miles, was made the perpetual boundary of the two empires, and the whole country to the West of that vast river belonging to his catholic majesty, by just as valid a tenure as the country eastward of the river to the king of England. Exclusive of this recent and decisive line of demarkation, by which the relative and political rights of both nations were clearly ascertained, the Spanish court referred to ancient treaties by which the rights of the crown of Spain were acknowledged in their full extent by Great Britain. Charles the third, king of Spain, died December 1788, and his son Charles the fourth, the present sovereign, considering in

justice of his claims, offered with dignified candor to submit the decision of this question to any one of the kings of Europe, leaving the choice wholly to his Britannic majesty. "It is sufficient" says the Spanish minister, count Florida Blanca, "for the Spanish monarch, that a crowned head, from full information of the facts, shall decide as he thinks just; adding, that on a late application to the court of St. Petersburg, in relation to similar encroachments on the part of the Russians, the empress had given the most positive orders that no settlement should be formed on that line of coast. As to the non-occupancy of the particular spot in question by the Spaniards, the court of Madrid justly observed, that such a plea, if admitted, would tend, by the incongruous intermixture of settlements, to the utter annihilation of all definite and permanent boundaries.

XIV. The royal message presented a statement of the facts relative to this business, and the house unanimously joined in an address to the king, assuring his majesty of "the determination of his faithful commons to afford his majesty the most zealous and affectionate support, in such measures as may become requisite for maintaining the dignity of his majesty's crown, and the essential interests of his dominions." A vote of credit passed the house for the sum of one million, and vigorous military and naval preparations were made in both kingdoms, in the contemplation of an immediate declaration of war.— It must be acknowledged that the hostile procedure of Spain had reduced the English ministry to a difficult dilemma. The value of the settlement at Nootka, in a commercial and national view, was beneath all calculation of insignificance; and it argued culpable inattention in the British ministers not to have been better and earlier apprised of the extent of the real or imaginary rights of Spain, whose jealousy at the slightest infringement upon those rights was sufficiently notorious. A moment's reflection must have sufficiently evinced, that a British settlement on the coast of California would be eventually productive of a serious contention with the court of Madrid:

did : and a small degree of discretion might have sufficed to obviate this ground of national quarrel. But in consequence of the rash step taken by Spain, the national honour was now at stake : and Mr. Grey, in moving for papers relative to this transaction, justly observed " that national honour was not, as some represented it, a visionary thing : a nation without honor was a nation without power. In losing this inestimable attribute, it inevitably lost the genuine spring of its spirit, energy, and action. Every nation therefore ought to be careful of its honour ; to be careful lest by one mean submission it encouraged an attack upon the dignity of its character—that best security for the preservation of its peace." Mr. Burke however, whose antipathies extended not to Spain, was on this occasion particularly anxious for the preservation of peace. " He hoped," he said, " that the national honor would not be found incompatible with the means of amicable accommodation. As we never ought to go to war for a profitable wrong, so we ought never to go to war for an unprofitable right. He therefore trusted that the intended armament would be considered not as a measure calculated to terminate the war happily, but to carry on the negotiation vigorously. He wished the war might be avoided. He had seen three wars, and we were gainers by none of them. Our abilities and resources were doubtless great ; but *then* did a country prove its magnanimity most clearly, when she manifested her moderation to be proportionate to her power. What indeed had we to contend for ? If all the distant territories of Spain were thrown into the scale of England, we should, like Spain, be only the weaker for our acquisitions."

XV. On the tenth of June 1790, the king terminated the session, and in his speech signified the probability of a speedy dissolution of the present parliament, assuring them in the warmest terms of " the deep and grateful sense which he entertained of that affectionate and unshaken loyalty, that uniform and zealous regard for the true principles of the constitution, that unremitted as-

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attention to the public happiness and prosperity, which had invariably directed all their proceedings," and on the day following the parliament was dissolved by proclamation.

XVI. Spain, sensible of her inability to contend alone with England, had, in an early stage of the negotiation, applied to the court of France, to know how far she could depend upon the fulfilment of the conditions of the family compact, in case of a rupture with great Britain. The Spanish memorial upon this subject was, by order of the king, laid before the national assembly, and gave rise to a very interesting report from the diplomatic committee, presented by the count de Mirabeau. "If we take a survey," say the reporters, "of the object in dispute between the courts of London and Madrid, we can hardly suppose that the peace will be interrupted. The territory in question between the two powers, in fact, belongs to neither; it is unquestionably the property of the independant inhabitants whom nature originally placed there. This line of distinction appears a little more consonant to truth than that marked out by the pope; and these people, distant from us as they are, if they are oppressed, are they not our allies? Shall we do so much injustice to the character of two enlightened nations as to suppose they would lavish their blood and treasure for the acquisition of so distant, so barren a spot of ground? We consider no nation nor people as our enemy. What is it but an insidious system of politics that has hitherto represented as our rival a nation whose steps we have followed, whose brilliant example has been a light to direct us in the attainment of our liberties, and with whom so many new motives lead us to be on a good understanding? A new species of rivalry, the emulation of good laws, ought to take place of an emulation fostered by politics and ambition. Let us not then, for a moment, believe that a free and enlightened people will take advantage of our transient commotions to renew unjustly the calamities of war, to attack our rising liberties, to check the happy developement of the principles which she has taught us. In her the base attempt would be sacrilege;
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in us, it would be sacrilege to believe her capable of it. Does not the same political religion now unite France and Great Britain? Are not despotism and its agents the common enemies of both? Will not the English be more certain of preserving their liberties while a nation of free Frenchmen shall be ready to act as their auxiliaries? But while we do homage to the philosophy of this people, let us at the same time attend to the maxims of prudence." After paying these very high compliments to the English nation, the report comes to the conclusion, "that it would not be just or honorable to annul the solemn engagements subsisting between Spain and France, at an instant when Spain is threatened with the same dangers which she had repeatedly warded off from them." An ardent wish for the establishment of permanent peace and cordial amity with England is notwithstanding the predominant sentiment in this celebrated report. "Perhaps," say they, "the moment is fast approaching, when LIBERTY, triumphant in both hemispheres, shall accomplish the wish of philosophy, by delivering the human species from the necessity of war."

XVII. Although the national assembly voted an immediate augmentation of the naval force, the court of Madrid plainly perceived the reluctance of the French nation to engage in a war with England, and yielding therefore to necessity, complied first with the harsh demand of previous restitution and indemnification, and at length, on the second of October 1790, a convention was signed at the Escorial, by which every point in dispute was conceded by Spain. By this convention the restitution of the buildings and vessels, and the reparation of the losses sustained by British subjects were secured; the right of navigation and fishery was equally conceded to both nations; illicit commerce with the Spanish settlements prohibited; and the British fishing vessels or others were restricted to ten leagues distance from the Spanish coast, unaccompanied however by any formal renunciation of sovereignty on the part of Spain. And the two powers were, on the other hand, equally restrained from attempting

attempting any settlement nearer to Cape Horn than the most southerly of the settlements actually formed by Spain. Thus ended a dispute, frivolous indeed in its origin, but which seemed in its progress to threaten very serious consequences, and which cost Great Britain the sum of three millions in warlike preparations; though this expence might have been, with great advantage to the interests of England, avoided, by submitting the whole of the dispute, in the mode proposed by Spain, to amicable arbitration.

XVIII. But though Great Britain was thus happily rescued from the horrors of war in this quarter of the globe, accident or ambition had at the same time involved our Indian possessions in a state of hostility and blood.—The usurpation of Hyder Ally, and the military prowess of his son and successor Tippoo Sultan, are facts already too fully stated to require any repetition. Of all the native princes of India, Tippoo was the most formidable to the British government, and the most active to disturb its authority, and counteract its interests. The peace of Mangalore in 1784 had, it was supposed, secured his fidelity by very feeble ties; and the splendid embassy which soon after that event he dispatched to France, afforded just reason to suspect that some plan was concerted between the old French government and the tyrant of Mysore, for the annoyance of the British settlements in India: but this plan was happily defeated by the same cause which prevented a war with Spain—the French revolution. The increasing power of Tippoo was not less formidable to the Dutch than to the English; and the vicinity of Cochin, their most flourishing settlement on the continent of India, the territories of that restless despot, filled them with alarming apprehensions for its safety. But the Dutch, fully sensible of the perilous situation of Cochin, had got possession of two other forts, situated between that place and Mysore, to protect their favorite settlement. One of these forts, called Cranganore, was taken from the Portuguese by the Dutch, who retained quiet possession of it some time in the year 1779, when it was conquered by Hyder Ally and garrisoned. When the war however
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broke out in 1780, between Hyder and the English, he was obliged to evacuate his garrisons on the Malabar coast, to employ his force in the Carnatic; and Holland and France soon after uniting with him against England, the Dutch availed themselves of Hyder's troubles, to seize clandestinely the fort. Hyder was highly offended at the liberty taken by his good ally, and complained loudly of the transaction; but by the mediation of the French, a compromise took place between the parties, and the matter was settled. The forts of Cranganore and Accotah were however still objects of Tippoo's ambition; and notwithstanding his father had ceded the former by agreement to the Dutch, he marched a formidable force in June 1789 towards Cranganore, with an avowed design of dispossessing the Dutch, and asserting a claim of right, founded on the transactions just related. Unable to retain the forts, and apprehensive for the fate of Cochin itself, the Dutch readily entered into a negotiation with the rajah of Travancore for the purchase of them. Tippoo, being informed of this circumstance, offered a larger sum than the rajah; but as the latter was the ally of Great Britain, who was consequently bound by treaty to assist him, that politic people plainly perceived, that by placing them in his hands, they erected a most powerful barrier against the encroachments of a turbulent and ambitious neighbour. The imprudence of the rajah in entering upon such a purchase while the title was disputed, drew down upon him the heaviest censures from the government of Madras; and he was repeatedly cautioned by sir Archibald Campbell and Mr. Holland his successor, not to proceed in the negotiation. Such however was the avarice and temerity of the rajah in making this acquisition, that he not only concluded the purchase with the Dutch, but even treated with the rajah of Cochin, without the permission of Tippoo, to whom the latter was an acknowledged tributary. The bargain was concluded in July 1790, though it was not till the fourth of August that the rajah informed the Madras government, through the resident Mr. Powney, that he *was on the point of making*

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the purchase. It was not to be expected that Tippoo would remain an idle spectator of these transactions.— He insisted on the claim which he retained over these forts, on the ground of their being conquered by his father, and in consequence of the subsequent compromise, he asserted, and with some plausibility, that in virtue of the feudal laws, no transfer of them could be made without his consent as sovereign of Mysore; and he also alledged, as a further cause of complaint against the rajah, that he had given protection to a number of his rebel subjects. Accordingly, on the twenty-ninth of December, Tippoo made a direct attack upon the lines of Travancore; but receiving a remonstrance from the British government of Fort St. George, he desisted from farther hostilities, and even apologized for his recent conduct, by affirming, “that the attack was occasioned by the rajah’s people having first fired on his troops; that notwithstanding this, he immediately ordered his troops to discontinue the attack, and sent back the people whom they had captured.” From the twenty ninth of December to the first of March 1790, Tippoo Sultan remained perfectly quiet, still however asserting his claims to the feudal sovereignty of the forts, but at the same time offering to submit the object in dispute to the decision of any impartial arbitration. The rajah, who appears all along confident of being supported by the British arms, ventured on the first of March to make an offensive attack on Tippoo’s lines. For this extraordinary step, the rajah alledged in excuse the hostile preparations of Tippoo in the erection of batteries, &c. &c. An engagement took place; and war being thus commenced, the British government conceived themselves bound to take an active part in favor of the rajah their ally. Though the justice of the war may be fairly questioned, yet as the favorite object of the English had long been the humbling of Tippoo, it must be confessed there was at least much policy in selecting the present period for the accomplishment of such a purpose.— With all the other native powers of India we were not only at peace, but treaties of alliance existed between

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Great Britain and the two most powerful states in that quarter, the Nizam and the Mahrattas, both of whom declared themselves in perfect readiness to exert their utmost force to crush the rising power of Myfore. Unfortunately for Tippoo, while he was thus exposed to the vengeance of a powerful confederacy, the distracted state of France cut off all hopes of assistance from his once great and formidable ally. Such was the situation of affairs in the east, previous to the meeting of parliament, and such were the facts which appeared of sufficient importance to induce the ministry of Great Britain to involve the nation in the expences and calamities of war.

XIX. The new parliament assembled on the twenty-fifth of November 1790. In the speech from the throne his majesty signified "his satisfaction that the differences with Spain were brought to an amicable termination." He observed, "that since the last session of parliament a foundation had been laid for a pacification between Austria and the Porte—that a separate peace had actually taken place between Russia and Sweden; but that the war between Russia and the Porte still continued. The principles on which I have hitherto acted," said his majesty, "will make me always desirous of employing the weight and influence of this country in contributing to the restoration of general tranquillity. He observed with concern the war in India, occasioned," he said, "by an unprovoked attack on an ally of the British nation; but which, from the state of our forces in India, and the confidence which the native powers had in the British name, there was a favorable prospect of bringing to a speedy and successful conclusion."

XX. On the third of December the chancellor of the exchequer presented to the house, a copy of the convention with Spain, the terms of which were ratified by both houses, but not unanimously: for the documents relative to the negotiation being partially withheld, Mr. Grey moved for the production of such papers as contained the requisitions made by ministers to the court of Spain; declaring, "that it was utterly impossible to de-

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side upon the policy of the late measures without sufficient documents, as the house could not at present determine, whether we might not have gained all the boasted advantages of the convention at a much less expence than had been incurred; or, whether the late disputes were owing to the restless ambition and unjust claims of Spain, or to the rashness, presumption, and ignorance of his majesty's ministers." Mr. Fox, affirmed, "that by this convention our rights were greatly curtailed. We could, before this transaction, settle in any part of South or North West America, not fortified against us by previous occupancy; we were now limited to settle in certain places only, and under certain restrictions. Our right of fishing before extended to the whole pacific ocean; it was now confined to certain distances from the shore. The line of demarkation which was pretended to be drawn on this occasion was," Mr. Fox remarked, "impracticable, since the most skilful navigator could never answer for an implicit obedience to the injunction, not to approach within thirty miles of a coast which he had never seen before. The line of demarkation by land was equally liable to dispute. It was to the north of the Spanish settlements: but suppose we were to meet with one further to the north than we expected, and a dispute was to arise, whether it was new or old; it would be some difficulty to send out builders to decide from the condition of the materials. A treaty conceived in such indecisive terms reminded him, he said, of a lawyer's will drawn up by himself, with a note in the margin of a particular clause: "This will afford room for an excellent disquisition in the court of chancery." Thus it was evident that the treaty was a treaty of concessions instead of acquisitions; and we had given up what was of infinite value to Spain, and retained that could never be of much to ourselves.

XXI. In the house of lords, the convention was reproved by the marquis of Lansdowne, in a speech replete with diplomatic information. His lordship took an extensive review of the politics of Europe from the peace of 1762. He said, "the basis of our politics at that pe-

period was a permanent pacific system for Europe. This principle we had pursued with respect to France, in extinguishing all false ideas of rivalry, in leaving nothing undefined, nothing to commissaries, nothing to foreign interference. With respect to Spain, the view was to give the most of what was conceded to the weakest power; and this was done with the more propriety, as American possessions were no longer the same object with England as formerly. As to Holland, the design was to stipulate in favor of the general freedom and extension of trade, and to counteract the spirit of commercial monopoly which had long distinguished that power. In pursuance of this system of politics, the commercial treaty with France had been concluded, as well as the convention with Spain respecting the Spanish American main in 1786. At this period the king of Prussia died, and then commenced an entire new system of English politics. France was again held out as our natural enemy. Every court was to tremble at the name of Britain. Holland was obliged by force, and not upon principle, to return to our alliance. The Turks and Swedes were put in motion to murder the Russians. Denmark was forbidden to interfere, and more work was found for the Emperor in the Belgic provinces. To crown the whole, the British triumph was at last to terminate in Nootka Sound. A few adventurers and men of letters had fitted out ships with false names; and under Portuguese colours and papers, prepared to break through a system regarding Spanish America, which had been sanctioned by the policy of Europe for more than two hundred years. In conclusion, we arm in a manner the most insulting, and summon Spain in terms equally unprecedented. Such was the present system, but we had not even pursued that with consistency and ability. We had neither secured France nor Spain, nor any other power. By the convention, the fishery was defined to our disadvantage, being limited to ten leagues from the shore. As to the right of trading, that was asserted even in the time of Elizabeth, by the treaty of 1670, and afterwards acknowledged in 1740.

But this proceeding at Nootka endangered the whole advantages of our commercial treaty with Spain. We were doing the work of other nations, and North America in particular. He should vote," his lordship said, "for the previous question: first, to shew the Spaniards the true temper of the nation, that we were not restless or insolent, as our enemies represent us: secondly, to preserve our reputation in Europe: and thirdly, to deter future ministers from a similar proceeding."

XXII. Whatever truth there may be in the observation of the marquis of Lansdowne, relative to other nations enjoying the exclusive benefits of the late armament, it is most certain that England was called upon to defray its expence. This business was introduced on the fifteenth of December, by Mr. Pitt, who after indulging in a flow of introductory eloquence, at last stated the whole amount of the expences incurred by the armament to be:

For the navy	£. 1,565,000
Army	64,000
Ordnance	151,000
Provisions to the East and West Indies	41,000

Making in the whole	1,821,000
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To which was added the vote of credit expended 1,000,000

Total expence of the armament	£. 2,821,000
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From this, however, the minister said that two hundred thousand pounds might be deducted for naval stores on hand; but this he should avoid, wishing to have every expediture occasioned in any degree by the armament, stated separately, and separately provided for: upon this principle he should include the expence of the addition of thousand seamen, at 312,000
 to be provided for 3,133,000
 This addition of debt, Mr. Pitt said, he hoped the house, considering the great resources of the country, would meet with energy. He accordingly proposed various temporary taxes, which would discharge the incumbent

in four years—with the assistance of five hundred thousand pounds, which he had it in contemplation to take from the *unclaimed dividends* lying in the bank of England, the amount of which he estimated at six hundred and sixty thousand pounds. This latter proposition excited a just alarm in all the great chartered companies, and in the commercial and mercantile world in general. It was urged, “that agreeably to the terms of the original contract between the government and the public creditors, the directors of the bank are constituted trustees for the public. When the money is once paid into the bank, it ceases to be public money, and is instantly converted into private property, which must there remain a sacred deposit till it is claimed by the private individuals to whom it appertains. And even in case of the expiration of the charter of the bank of England, the directors still remain a corporation by law, for the express purpose of executing their delegated trust. What mischief may not result from the admission of a power in government arbitrarily to depart from the conditions of the contract actually made with the public? Under the term *unclaimed dividends* is indeed veiled a gross fallacy. Exclusive of the dividends of the last three years, which are not properly *unclaimed* but merely *unreceived* dividends, the balance amounts scarcely to a fifth part of the sum which the minister proposes to seize. If the recent and fluctuating balances of the bank are thus liable to seizures, the minister may one day order the money to be paid into the bank, and the next he may without any violation of public faith command it to be repaid into the exchequer. But in fact this is no other than a measure of injustice and violence, calculated to compel the bank to relinquish their trust when the original and express purposes of it are evidently unaccomplished.” This was a bold and daring attempt of the minister, but he soon found that it was one of those measures to which the usual complaisance of the house would not be extended, and therefore he contented, by way of compromise, to accept of a loan of five hundred thousand pounds from the bank without interest.

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so long as a floating balance to that amount should remain in the hands of the cashier.

XXIII. A subject of considerable importance came next under the cognizance of parliament. The question in debate was, in substance, whether a prosecution by impeachment of the commons, does, or does not, abate by the dissolution of parliament? Mr. Burke introduced the discussion on the seventeenth of December, by moving, "that the house do resolve itself into a committee, to take into consideration the state of the impeachment of Warren Hastings, esq." This, after some opposition, being carried, he made a second motion, "that an impeachment by this house in the name of the commons of Great Britain, against Warren Hastings, esq. for high crimes and misdemeanors, is still pending." The negative of this proposition was supported by the entire corps of lawyers in the house almost without an exception. Mr. Erskine, who had been long and justly distinguished as a zealous friend to the constitution and liberties of his country, endeavoured on this occasion to shew, that in consequence of the dissolution of parliament, the impeachment had abated; and in this opinion, he was warmly seconded by all the crown lawyers. Upon this great question, in the decision of which the honor, the dignity, and the authority of the house were so deeply involved, the speaker with peculiar propriety rose and delivered his opinion. "If," said he, "the maxim laid down by the lawyers were admitted to be just, the consequence was obvious. The impeachment of a profligate or corrupt minister might, by the insidious intervention of the prerogative, at any time be rendered nugatory and abortive. In the view of the constitution, and even by the forms of parliament, the impeachment is preferred not by the house of commons merely, but by all the commons of England; and the house can be considered, in relation to the prosecution, as no more than the agents and attorneys of the people at large. A second house of commons therefore, though certainly possessing a discretionary power of dropping the prosecution, if upon due consideration they

they are of opinion it does not rest upon a just foundation, are as certainly at full liberty to proceed in it, if in their judgment conducive to the safety or interests of the state. In an impeachment of the nature of the present, it would scarcely be imagined that twenty two complex articles could by any mode of investigation be decided upon in a single session. If then, agreeably to the genius or the ancient constitution, parliaments themselves were to be made annual, the labor would be truly Symphean, as such a trial never could arrive at a legal termination. Such were the plain dictates of common sense; but in resorting to rules of law, and precedents of parliament, doubts and difficulties presented themselves. Upon those remote and obscure precedents, which occurred previous to the civil wars of the last century, little stress was laid; but during the reign of Charles the second, the question had come repeatedly under the formal and regular discussion of both houses. These precedents, and such as had since occurred, the speaker had accurately examined; and in his report of them upon this occasion commented on each, with great judgment and ability. In the famous case of lord Danby in 1679, the parliament was unquestionably dissolved for the purpose of screening the minister from the effects of the impeachment then actually pending against him. But the next parliament understood their privileges too well to make the slightest concession on this important constitutional point. And in compliance with the claims of the commons, the house of peers, March the nineteenth, 1678-9. RESOLVED, "That the dissolution of the last parliament doth not alter the state of the impeachment, brought up by the commons in that parliament. In conformity to this decision, the trial of the earl of Danby was continued in no less than four successive parliaments, till in February 1683-4, no parliament being then sitting, or likely to sit, his lordship was bailed by authority of the court of king's bench. On the nineteenth of May 1685, the first and only parliament of king James the second was convened; and the question coming immediately

mediately before them, respecting the validity of the proceedings on the late impeachment, it was almost unanimously determined, that the resolution of March 1679 be reversed and annulled, and lord Danby and the other lords were discharged from their recognizances. But it being evidently the province of the peers in their judicial capacity *jus dicere*, and not *jus dare*, the reversal of the declaratory resolution of 1679 was regarded by the commons as of no weight or authority whatever. In the second parliament convened after the revolution, an order was made by the lords, April 1690, to take into consideration whether impeachments continue from parliament to parliament; but the house adjourned the decision of this question from time to time till the parliament was prorogued. And on their next meeting, October 1690, the earls of Peterborough and Salisbury, impeached by the preceding parliament, were discharged from their bail; but whether in virtue of the act of free and general pardon that had recently passed, or of the resolution of May 1685, is not expressed. In 1695, the earl of Danby, now duke of Leeds, was a second time impeached, on grounds totally distinct from the former: and this impeachment, notwithstanding the reversal of 1685, continued pending under several successive parliaments, though for the most part in an almost dormant state, for no less than six years; till on the twenty-fourth of June, 1701, the house of lords resolved, 'That articles having been exhibited against the duke of Leeds, to which he had answered, and the commons *not prosecuting*, the impeachment and articles should be dismissed.' On the first of April 1701, the earls of Portland and Oxford and the lords Somers and Halifax were impeached: but the commons refusing to exhibit articles against them in the mode prescribed by the peers, these impeachments were on the last day of the session dismissed. The next parliament, which met December 1701, it is true, took no steps whatever to revive the impeachments; not that they admitted the principle of abatement by dissolution, but that, being of a political complexion totally different from the

the preceding parliament, they, with a great majority of the people of England, considered the public conduct of these great whig lords not only as innocent, but in the highest degree meritorious. In July 1715, the earl of Oxford was impeached. In June 1716, the parliament was prorogued; and on their subsequent meeting, February 1717, the earl petitioning that his imprisonment might not be indefinite, a committee was appointed by the house to search for and report such precedents as relate to the continuance of impeachments from session to session, and from parliament to parliament; which report being read, it was moved to resolve, 'That the impeachment of the commons against the earl of Oxford is determined by the intervening prorogation.' This was negatived on the division by 37 to 45 lords. But a protest ensued, signed by ten lords, in which the general proposition is assumed, that a dissolution would determine the impeachment; and their lordships affirm, that there is no essential difference in law between a prorogation and dissolution. If so, the inference surely is, that the 87 lords would have decided similarly in case of dissolution. It deserves specific notice, that lord chief justice Holt, that great authority on all points of constitutional law, in the case of *Peters and Benning*, 13th of William the third, publicly delivered it as his opinion, notwithstanding the existing resolution of 1685, that impeachments begun in one parliament might be prosecuted in another. And this appears at all times the prevailing opinion of the whigs. Upon a general review of these facts and precedents, the speaker gave it as his deliberate and decided judgment, that the impeachment was still legally pending, and that the resolution of 1685, passed, as there was reason to believe, by the corrupt influence of the court, and in defiance of a solemn prior decision of both houses, and which in no instance since the revolution had been formally and avowedly acted upon, was wholly invalid and nugatory." In this opinion Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, and the most eminent parliamentary authorities on both sides concurred. Mr. Burke in particular was poignantly se-

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were on the lawyers. He said, "he was concerned to find his expectations from the gentlemen of the law disappointed. Not one ray of legal light had been thrown upon the question from that quarter. The reason he deducted from the confession of a learned gentleman who sat near him, that he did not *feel himself so much at home*. They were only sojourners at that house; they only perched in their flight to a higher region. They exercised themselves there in light skirmishes with the rights of the commons, with which in the other house they meant to carry on a war. But the law of parliament knew of no such monstrous defect as that by which a state criminal might free himself, by his own act, and at his own pleasure, from the pursuit of his country. On the committee dividing, the numbers were, for the motion to search for precedents, ayes 30, noes 143. Mr. Burke's original motion was then put and carried without a division.

1791. XXIV. This great question, which involved the most important right of the commons, being thus disposed of by the house, Mr. Burke on the fourteenth of February brought forward a motion for the purpose of shortening the trial of Mr. Hastings. "He acknowledged," he said, "that a trial of three years was a hardship upon an individual, but it was upon an individual largely salaried to bear the responsibility annexed to a high situation. Even this hardship might be salutary, as it might teach persons in office not only to shun guilt, but suspicion. The complaints on the length of the trial had," he observed, "chiefly proceeded from the gentlemen of the law, who measured by the standard of the meaner transactions, in which they were conversant. The rabbit, which breeds six times a year, is unable to comprehend the time of gestation proper for the elephant. An action *are clausum fugit*, or *de parco fracto*, furnished no standard for a trial for breaking down the fences of general property, and desolating whole provinces. He complained that the length of the trial had been increased by Indian influence. Indian influence now extended from the Needles to Johnny Grott's house: it was to be found

found in the house of commons itself. It might seem well for the people of India, that they had so many advocates in that house to plead their cause; but it was to be doubted, whether gentlemen who made their fortunes in India were proper representatives of that people: they were, in his opinion, the ANTICHRIST of representation. But the greatest obstruction of all proceeded from the body of the law. These learned gentlemen, who on every occasion call others to account, had a rooted enmity to impeachments, by which they might be called to account themselves. In their evidence, in the forms of the tribunal, and in every step of their progress, the lawyers had endeavoured to throw obstacles and embarrassments in their way. In the fixed and unalterable course of human affairs, it has pleased God to decree that injustice should be rapid, and justice slow: yet he was determined to the utmost of his power to remove every just cause of complaint in the future prosecution of the impeachment. He therefore moved, "that the managers be instructed to proceed to no other parts of the impeachment, excepting such as relate to contracts, pensions, and allowances; which was carried with trivial opposition.

XXV. The resolution of the commons of the twenty-third of December, which decided that an impeachment did not abate by a dissolution of parliament, was strongly contested in the house of lords. On a message from the commons, that they were ready to proceed in their evidence, their lordships appointed a committee to search into precedents, which occasioned a suspension of the business till nearly the conclusion of the session. At length the report being made, lord Porchester moved, May the sixteenth, "that their lordships now proceed in the trial. This was opposed by the lord chancellor, who recommended the appointment of a second committee to search for more precedents, and defended by lord Loughborough, now a leading whig, in a very able speech, in the course of which he warned their lordships "not to proceed uncautiously with regard to the popular part of the constitution. Let them not deny that the people were

any thing, lest they compelled them to think they were every thing. In commenting upon the precedents before the house, he pointed out the fallacies of sir George Jeffries and other court sycophants, and rested his argument on the authority of the great constitutional lawyers Hale, Holt, and Foster." His lordship said, "he had it in charge from the lord president, lord Camden, who was prevented from personal attendance, to state that nobleman's opinion as perfectly co-incident with his own: and the lord president had also left with him an opinion of the famous Selden, that the new parliament convened in consequence of the duke of Buckingham's impeachment 1628, were authorised to have called upon their lordships for judgment against the duke." The abatement of the impeachment was on the other hand maintained by lord Kenyon, lord Abingdon, &c. but on the division the motion of lord Porchester was carried by a great and decisive majority. Thus was this interesting question finally settled to the satisfaction of the public; and their lordships acquainted the house of commons by message, that they were now ready to proceed in the trial. But very little progress was made in it during the short remainder of the session.

XXVI. The boundaries of religious toleration were this year extended. It is a truth not very flattering to national liberality, that, notwithstanding the boasted rational freedom of our constitution, no country in Europe has been more jealous of their church establishment. Scarcely have the Roman catholic states themselves loaded with a more oppressive weight of civil penalties those who dissented in religious opinion. As the Romish church was the grand object of terror in the early ages of the reformation, it was scarcely matter of surprise that our statute-book should contain rigorous edicts against the professors of that obnoxious faith. It is only surprising that they should have been suffered to remain in force for centuries of peace and tranquillity, when the power of the pope is annihilated even in countries professing his religion, and when all the dangerous principles of the Ro-

mish creed are disavowed by the members of that church. Religious animosity has been in all ages of the christian church a source of calamity to the human kind; and he who endeavours to point out the absurdity of sacrificing the cardinal virtue of charity, at the shrine of vain and presumptuous speculation, deserves the thanks of society. A reform in the penal statutes was at this time peculiarly called for, since in the year 1790, a large body of catholic dissenters had formally protested against the temporal power of the pope, against his assumed authority of releasing men from their civil obligations, or dispensing with the sacredness of oaths. It was upon this principle that Mr. Mitford moved on the twenty-first of February for a committee of the whole house, to enable him "to bring in a bill to relieve, upon conditions and under restrictions, persons called protestant catholic dissenters, from certain penalties, to which papists are by law subject." When the bill was presented Mr. Fox objected to it, not for what it did, but for what it did not contain. He contended for the bill being made general. "Let the statute-book," said this great statesman, "be revised, and strike out all those laws which attach penalties to mere opinions. He reprobated the absurdity and iniquity of those statutes which condemn every man who worships God in his own way, as guilty of treason against the state." This liberal amendment not proving satisfactory to the house, the bill passed in its original shape.

XXVII. The cause of liberty was less successful in another instance. The rights of juries had long been in an indefinite and indeterminate state, particularly in the case of libels; and disputes disgraceful in themselves, and injurious to the administration of justice, had frequently arisen between the court and the jury, between the judges and the counsel. Mr. Fox, ever active in the defence of popular rights, moved for a bill to ascertain the authority of juries in the matter of libel. With respect to the pretended distinction between law and fact, Mr. Fox observed, that when a man was accused of murder, a crime consisting of law and fact, the jury every day found

verdict

verdict of guilty: and this was also the case in felony and every other criminal indictment. Libels were the only exception, the single anomaly. He contended, that if the jury had no jurisdiction over libels, the counsel who addressed them on either side, as to the criminality of the publication, were guilty of a gross and insolent sarcasm. Mr. Fox put this matter in a strong point of view, by adverting to the law of treason. It was admitted on all hands, that a writing might be an overt act of treason. In this case, if the court of king's bench were to say to the jury, 'consider only whether the criminal published the paper—do not consider the nature of it—do not consider whether it correspond to the definition of treason or not'—would Englishmen endure that death should be inflicted without a jury having had an opportunity of delivering their sentiments whether the individual was or was not guilty of the crime with which he was charged? Having shewn that the law of libels was contrary to the original principles of law, Mr. Fox said, that if the Committee were clear as to this point, their wisest and most proper measure would be to enact a declaratory law respecting it: but if they were of opinion that high authorities on the other side made the law doubtful, they might settle the law for the future without any reference to what it had been in times past. Mr. Pitt agreed with the principles stated by Mr. Fox, but instead of a committee of justice, recommended the bringing in a bill "to remove all doubts respecting the rights and functions of juries in criminal cases." The bill was accordingly introduced, and passed the commons, but on its transmission to the house of lords, it was opposed on the second reading by the lord chancellor, on pretence of its being too late in the session to discuss a measure of such importance. The principle of the bill was ably defended by the lords Camden and Loughborough, with whom lord Grenville concurred; but the bill was finally postponed.

XXVIII. The evidence on the slave trade being at length closed, Mr. Wilberforce, on the eighteenth of April 1791, brought forward his long expected motion of

abolition, which he introduced with a copious and convincing display of the arguments in favor of that measure. The crimes and villainies to which this horrid traffic had given rise, were detailed with a minuteness which placed not merely the persons actually concerned, but human nature itself, in a light the most degrading and detestable. The mover, with all the eloquence of feeling and of truth, asserted that the history of this commerce was written in characters of blood. "Let us," said he, "turn our eyes for relief from this disgraceful scene to some ordinary wickedness. The steps taken by parliament in this business had by no means," he said, "bettered the condition of the wretched Africans, when on board our ships: for, even in the year 1788, when the friends of humanity were agitating the subject within those walls, all the misery, all the compulsion, all the despair, all the infamy which on a former occasion he had brought into their view, were actually going forward in the slave ships; and it appeared upon the evidence, that several of these wretches voluntarily threw themselves into the sea, and before they expired, shewed signs of exultation that they had escaped. A vessel of a hundred and twenty tons, commanded by captain Knox, carried two hundred and ninety slaves, and forty-three other persons: the slaves had not room to lie on their backs, and yet captain Knox had declared, 'they slept tolerably comfortable!' Another vessel of a hundred and eight tons carried four hundred and fifty slaves; and a third, of a hundred and fifty tons, six hundred. It was scarcely possible to conceive the sufferings of those unhappy beings thus crowded together, and parched by the sultry heat of a burning sun: indeed the whole formed a scene of wretchedness and depravity, from the contemplation of which the mind turned with disgust and horror. Mr. Wilberforce also produced instances to shew that the slaves in the islands were not under the protection of law. Colonial statutes," he said, "had indeed been passed, but they were a mere dead letter; since, however ill treated, the slaves had not been considered as having any right to redress. An instance

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astounding cruelty appeared in the testimony of Mr. Rois, as committed by a Jew; but, though a matter of notoriety, it does not seem to have entered into the contemplation of any person to call him to a legal account. Some instances had indeed occurred *very lately*, of convictions; one of which was, for a master having cut the mouth of a child from ear to ear; when the verdict of the jury evinced, that the doctrine of calling masters to account was entirely novel, as it only pronounced him guilty—subject to the opinion of the court, if immoderate correction of a slave by his master be a crime indictable. The court determined in the affirmative; and for this inhuman act of cruelty, the monster of a master was fined twenty-five shillings. With respect to the character of the Africans, many creditable witnesses, he observed, had spoken highly of their ingenuity, tractability, cheerfulness, hospitality, and every quality that evinced them to be fitted for civilized life. To suppose them an inferior species, and the peculiar objects of the divine vengeance, he termed a gross and impious blasphemy. Whatever might be the fate of his motion, he had endeavoured," he said, "to discharge his duty, and he was perfectly satisfied of one thing, *that the public had already abolished the slave trade.*" He concluded with moving "for a bill to prevent the farther importation of African negroes into the British colonies;" which after a long and animated debate, was negatived by a majority of seventy-five voices.

XXIX. To qualify in some measure the rejection of his motion, a bill was introduced by Mr. Thornton and passed, for chartering a company to make an establishment at Sierra Leona on the coast of Africa, for the purpose of cultivating West Indian and other tropical products by the use of free negroes. This experiment has already been attended with very beneficial effects. It has, by inspiring confidence in the English name, opened a more unreserved intercourse with the natives, and not only promises to repay the risk and hazard of the benevolent

founders of the colony, but also holds out a prospect of being eventually of considerable national consequence.

XXX. As the arbitrary and despotic government of Canada had occasioned numerous and well founded complaints, Mr. Pitt, in pursuance of an intimation in the royal speech, moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal certain parts of the act respecting the government of Canada passed in the fourteenth year of his majesty's reign; and to enact farther provisions for the better government thereof. By the proposed bill, the province was divided into two distinct governments, by the appellations of Upper and Lower Canada. Councils nominated by the sovereign, and houses of assembly chosen by the people were established in each. The habeas corpus act was asserted as a fundamental law of their constitution: and by a very important and admirable clause, the British parliament were restrained from imposing any taxes whatever but such as might be necessary for the regulation of trade and commerce; and to guard against the abuse of this power, the produce of such taxes was to be at the disposal of the respective provincial legislatures. The great outline of the bill was deservedly approved; but, it was justly objected to it, that some of the clauses militated against its general principle.

XXXI. On this ground it was opposed by Mr. Fox with extraordinary ability. "The great object of all popular assemblies," Mr. Fox said, "was, that the people should be fully and fairly represented; but when the assembly of one province was to consist only of sixteen, and the other of thirty persons, they deluded the people by a mockery of representation. They seemed to give them a free constitution, while in fact they withheld it. As he hoped it would never be said, that the constitution of Canada was modeled after that of England. That the representatives should be elected for the term of seven years he reprobated as equally inconsistent with freedom. Even in England, where the frequent return of elections was attended with so much real inconvenience, the propriety of the septennial bill was justly a subject of doubt: but

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a country so differently circumstanced as Canada, there could be no plausible objection to annual or at most triennial elections. Another ground of objection was, that the legislative councils were unlimited as to numbers by any other restriction than the pleasure of the king; to whom a power was also reserved of annexing to certain honorary and titular distinctions an hereditary right of sitting in council. As to hereditary honors, or hereditary powers, to say they were good or not, as a general proposition was difficult: but he saw nothing so good in them as to warrant their introduction into a country where they were not known. He did not think it wise to destroy them where they existed; but to create them where they did not exist, he considered as exceedingly unwise. He could not account for it, unless it was that Canada having been formerly a French colony, there might be an opportunity of reviving those titles of honor, the extinction of which some gentlemen so much deplored, and to revive in the west that spirit of chivalry which had fallen into so much disgrace in a neighbouring country."

XXXII. These incidental expressions roused the fury of Mr. Burke, who on the re-commitment of the bill, May the sixth, rose, as he said, to speak to its general principle. He enlarged upon the importance of the act which they were now about to perform. "The first consideration was the competency of the house to such an act. A body of rights, commonly called the *Rights of Man*, had been lately imported from a neighbouring kingdom. The principle of this new code was, that all men were by nature free, and equal in respect of their rights. If this code therefore were admitted, the power of the house would extend no farther than to call together the inhabitants of Canada to choose a constitution for themselves. The practical effects of this system might be seen in St. Domingo and the other French islands. They were flourishing and happy till they heard of the Rights of Man. As soon as this system arrived among them, Pandora's box, replete with every mortal evil, seemed to fly open; hell itself to yawn, and every demon of mischief

to

to overspread the face of the country. Ought this example to induce us to send to our colonies a cargo of the Rights of Man? As soon would he send them a bale of infected cotton from Marseilles. The state of France was indeed deplorable. They had got a king who was every thing in name, and nothing in reality; over whom M. la Fayette, the chief jailor of Paris, mounted guard, as a state prisoner; and who being desirous of a little fresh air, obtained a day rule to go five miles from Paris, but was stopped by one of his faithful grenadiers presenting a bayonet to his breast." Here Mr. Burke was loudly and universally called to order, and compelled at length to sit down amidst the general uproar. When the tumult had subsided, Mr. Fox, with becoming firmness, defended his former sentiments relative to the French revolution; and repeated "that he thought it upon the whole one of the most glorious events in the history of mankind. In this assertion however he spoke of the *revolution*, not of the *constitution*, which still remained to be improved by experience and accommodated to circumstances. The Rights of man, which his right honorable friend had ridiculed as visionary, were the basis of the British constitution. Our statute book recognized the original inherent rights of the people as men, which no prescription could supersede, no accident remove or obliterate. These had once been the principles of his right honorable friend, from whom he had learned them. His right honourable friend had said with equal energy and emphasis 'that he knew not how to draw a bill of indictment against a whole people.' Having been taught by him that no revolt of a nation was caused without provocation, he could not help rejoicing at the success of a revolution resting on the same basis with our own,—the immutable and unalienable Rights of Man." Mr. Burke rose again, and in vehement terms insisted "that he was perfectly in order; and the discussion of the Quebec bill was a proper opportunity to put the country on its guard against those dangerous doctrines which prevailed in France, and which had found so many advocates here. He observed, that he had

differed

diffided on many occasions from Mr. Fox, but there had been no loss of friendship between them. But there was something in the *accursed* French constitution that envenomed every thing." Mr. Fox, on hearing this, interrupted him, saying "there was no loss of friendship." Mr. Burke replied "*there was*, he knew the price of his conduct; he had done his duty, and their friendship was at an END." Mr. Fox, on whom the attention of the house was now eagerly fixed, rose to reply; but his feelings were too powerful for utterance. All the ideas so long cherished of gratitude, esteem, and affection, rushed upon his generous and susceptible mind; and involuntary tears were observed to steal down his cheek. A profound and expressive silence pervaded the house. At length Mr. Fox, recovering himself, said, "that however events might have altered the mind of his right honorable friend, for such he must still call him, he could not easily consent to relinquish and dissolve that intimate connection which had for twenty-five years subsisted between them. He hoped that Mr. Burke would think on past times, and whatever expressions of his had caused the offence, that he would at least believe such was not his intention." The concessions of Mr. Fox made no visible impression on the haughty and unbending temper of Mr. Burke; and from this day a schism took place in the politics of the opposition party, which has been productive of very important consequences.

XXXIII. The only remaining transaction which fell under the notice of parliament this session, was the business of our interference between the Porte and Russia in favor of the former power. The just grounds of the quarrel can only be understood by adverting to the actual situation of affairs on the continent. Leopold, king of Hungary, had no sooner assumed the Austrian sceptre, than he resolved on terminating the war with Turkey; and under the powerful mediation of England and Prussia, a convention was concluded August 1790, at Reichbach, after a negotiation of some months, protracted by the unavailing hope of retaining possession of the important

portant fortress of Belgrade, which, fifty years before, England had exerted her utmost influence to secure to the house of Austria. But now, swayed by Prussian counsels, and eagerly solicitous to advance the interests of that upstart and insolent power, in contra-distinction to those of Austria, the ancient and genuine ally of Britain, she harshly and peremptorily insisted on its restitution, in common with all the other Austrian conquests, to the Ottoman Porte. In return, the Austrian Netherlands were guaranteed to the house of Austria, and the possession of the imperial crown eventually ensured to his Hungarian majesty. The Flemings refusing, notwithstanding their distressed condition, to return to the Austrian dominion, a great military force was sent into the country in the autumn of 1790, under the command of marshal Bender, which quickly effected their total reduction; and on the first of January 1791, a solemn *te Deum* was sung at Brussels in celebration of that happy event. Sweden also, disappointed in her views and projects of ambition, thought proper to sign a separate peace with Russia, August 1790, on the basis of the former treaties of Abo and Nystad. The courts of London and Berlin, elated with the success of their mediation at Reichenbach, now in high and arrogant language signified to the empress of Russia their pleasure, that peace should be restored between the Ottoman and Russian empires, on the terms of a general restitution of conquests. The empress replied with equal haughtiness, "that she would make peace and war with whom she pleased, without the intervention of any foreign power." Not however choosing too far to provoke the resentment of these formidable and self-created arbitrators, she secretly intimated her willingness to conclude a peace with Turkey, on the condition of retaining the country eastward to the Niefter, as a reasonable indemnification for the expences of the war. This was a waste and desolate tract of territory, valuable only for the security it afforded to her former acquisitions, and for including within its limits the strong and important fortress of Oczakov. This being peremptorily refused, the conference broke

off, and the empress determined to support her claims by the sword.

XXXIV. Mr. Pitt therefore, on the twenty-eighth of March, delivered a message to the house of commons from his majesty, importing, "that the endeavours which he had used in conjunction with his allies to effect a pacification not having proved successful, his majesty judged it requisite, in order to add weight to his representations, to make some further augmentation of his naval force." This message being taken into consideration, Mr. Pitt enlarged much on the necessity of attending to the preservation of the balance of power in Europe.

The influence of the Turkish empire, he said, was of great effect in the general scale. Its present situation was such as to afford just cause of apprehension to other powers; and to PRUSSIA in particular it must be highly injurious, to suffer the Turkish empire to be diminished in force and consequence. He therefore moved an address, assuring his majesty that his *faithful commons* would make good such expences as may be found necessary."

XXXV. The prospect of a war with Russia on these frivolous grounds, astonished every thinking individual, alarmed the public, and was opposed in the house with the whole strength and talents of opposition. Mr. Fox said, the right honorable mover of the address had enveloped himself in mystery and importance, but explained nothing. When the balance of power was mentioned as a reason for arming, it ought to be shewn how it was endangered. We had no quarrel with the empress of Russia; we had no alliance with Turkey. But by the absurd mode of interfering in the affairs of every sovereign state, we involved ourselves in continual expence, and were exposed to the perpetual hazard of war. It was to second the ambitious policy of Prussia, and not for any interests of our own, that we were now called upon to arm. The Marina, it was well known, had offered to give up all conquests but a barren district, unprofitable and worthless, except for a single place contained in it, which was Oczakow. But would any one seriously pre-

tend that the balance of Europe depended on the trivial circumstance, whether Oczakow should in future belong to the empire of Russia or of Turkey? That this was even with ministers themselves a novel idea, was plain; for Oczakow had been taken in 1788, and in 1789 his majesty had assured the parliament and the nation, that the situation of affairs was such as promised us a continuance of peace." The question was however carried in favor of the address by 228 to 135 voices.

XXXVI. It has been said, and with great truth, that this decision of itself was sufficient to demonstrate the necessity of a parliamentary reform: for when the representatives voted for a Russian war, they were so far from speaking the sentiments of the nation, that the people every where execrated the measure. Sensible that this was the prevailing opinion of the country, Mr. Grey, on the twelfth of April, brought the business once more before the house, by moving a series of resolutions expressive of the impolicy, inexpediency, and folly of the measure. On the part of the ministry nothing satisfactory was offered. The importance of Oczakow was magnified to a most ridiculous excess. It was styled the key of Constantinople, whence it led to the acquisition of Alexandria and the lower Egypt. The success of the ministry in former negotiations was triumphantly dwelt upon, and the confidence of the house challenged in terms unusually strong and pointed. Mr. Sheridan, with sarcastic keenness, asked the minister "on what basis this confidence was to rest. Did he recollect the different prospect to which we had been directed to turn our eyes in this year? Did he recollect that this was the promised millennium, that halcyon year in which we had been flattered, instead of fresh burthens, with a reduction of expence, and a *clear surplus* for the extinction of the national debt? The system we had adopted in concert with Prussia was," he said, "a system of ambition, of vain glory and intrigue, and it fastened upon us a concern of all others the most pernicious—that of English interference with German politics. As to the doctrine of confidence in

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in ministers, he totally abjured it. The more constitutional doctrine was that of suspicion and watchfulness. The minister had indeed risen wonderfully in his demands. He recollected the time when he had contented himself with asking only for a guarded and rational confidence. He then advanced to the pitch of a firm and steady confidence; and it was at least grown into a blind and implicit confidence. And it appeared that the degree of confidence required, rose in an exact *ratio* to the absurdity of the measure to be adopted." On the division, the opposition appeared greatly increased, the numbers being ayes 179 noes 259.

XXXVII. To enter into a war in the face of such a minority, and in defiance of the opinion of the public was an undertaking which the minister, with all his acknowledged courage, did not choose to attempt; and therefore, after all the bustling, threatening, and dreadful preparation, the point in dispute was suddenly and wisely given up, and Oczakow remained in the possession of Russia. The session of parliament terminated June the tenth, 1791, his majesty expressed his perfect satisfaction at the zeal with which the two houses had applied themselves to the consideration of the different objects which he had recommended to their attention.

XXXVIII. Soon after the rising of parliament the nation was disgraced by a wanton and unprovoked series of tumults and outrages, which, for the space of four days, spread terror and alarm through the populous town of Birmingham and the adjacent country. It has been already seen that a difference of sentiment on the character of the French revolution gave rise to a heated and violent discussion in parliament,—ill according with the dignity of a legislative assembly. But this cause of discord was not confined to the higher orders of society: it also pervaded the inferior classes; and considerable pains were taken by ministerial journalists to inflame the passions of the populace against the asserters of Gallic liberty. On the other hand, the whig party and the friends of freedom in Great Britain rejoiced in the emancipation of a neighbouring

bouring nation, and flattered themselves that they saw in the success of the French revolution, not only the annihilation of despotism in that country, but the commencement of a new system of politics in Europe, the basis of which was peace, happiness, and mutual concord.

XXXIX. In most of the larger towns of Great Britain, associations were formed for the celebration of the French revolution on the fourteenth of July: but the opposite party were not indifferent spectators of these proceedings: the most scandalous and inflammatory insinuations were conveyed in newspapers and pamphlets, stigmatizing the friends of freedom as determined republicans, and representing the act of joining in a convivial meeting on the odious fourteenth of July, as an attempt to overturn the British constitution in church and state. Notwithstanding the pains which had been taken to depreciate those associations, the meeting in London consisted of not less than fifteen hundred respectable gentlemen, many of them literary characters of high reputation. As, however, the populace collected in great numbers round the Crown and Anchor tavern, where the meeting was held, to prevent the consequences to be dreaded from a mob whose minds were insidiously prepared for tumult, the company very prudently dispersed at an early hour; and the day passed away in the metropolis without any other symptom of riotous commotion.

XL. At Birmingham there were other causes of discord than the French revolution. According to Dr. Priestley's statement, a violent animosity had subsisted for years between the high church party, and the dissenters of that place; the cause of which the doctor candidly attributes to the circumstance of the latter being possessed of all the principal civil power, and constantly nominating to the civil offices. The religious controversies which took place between Dr. Priestley and some of the clergy of Birmingham, greatly contributed to increase this animosity; and even on the application for the repeal of the test act, some serious disturbances were apprehended. In such circumstances, it is not surprising that the igno-

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rant part of the inhabitants should confound the cause of the French revolution with that of the dissenters, especially since the majority of that persuasion have from the revolution 1688 been firmly attached to the whig system, and since Dr. Priestley himself was well known to be a decided and powerful advocate for universal liberty, civil and religious.

XLI. A few days previous to the meeting in commemoration of the French revolution at Birmingham, six copies of the most inflammatory and seditious hand bill, proposing the French revolution as a model to the English, and exciting them to rebellion, were left in a public house by some person unknown. As the contents of this hand bill found a quick and general circulation, they occasioned a ferment in the town. The magistrates offered a reward of one hundred guineas for discovering the author, printer, or publisher of the obnoxious paper; and the friends of the meeting intended for the fourteenth, published at the same time an advertisement explicitly denying the sentiments and doctrines of the seditious hand bill, and disavowing all connexion with its author or publisher.

XLII. The views and intentions of the meeting having, however, been grossly misrepresented, and the gentlemen concerned suspecting the seditious hand-bill to be an artifice projected by their adversaries, thought it most adviseable to relinquish the scheme; and accordingly notice was given to that effect: but, at the pressing instance of several persons dissatisfied with this determination, the intention was revived, and the company met at the appointed time to the number of between eighty and ninety. The ingenious Mr. Keir, well known for his great attainments in chymistry and other branches of philosophy, and a member of the established church, was placed in the chair. The gentlemen had scarcely met before the house was surrounded by a tumultuous crowd, who testified their disapprobation by hisses and groans, and by the shout of CHURCH AND KING, which became the watch word on this occasion. At five o'clock the

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company dispersed, and soon afterwards the windows in the front of the hotel were demolished, and the house otherwise injured; and notwithstanding the appearance of the magistrates, the mob forcibly entered and searched the house in quest of the guests, but fortunately found none of them remaining.

XLIII. Dr. Priestley did not attend the festival, but dined at home at Fairhill with a friend from London. After supper, they were alarmed with the intelligence, that the mob were assembled at the new dissenting meeting-house belonging to the doctor. The rioters soon set the meeting on fire, and never left it till nothing remained that could be consumed. They attacked afterwards his old meeting-house, but finding from its situation it would be dangerous to the neighbourhood to set it on fire, they adopted another plan, and took out the pulpit, pew, &c. and burnt the whole in an adjoining burying ground. About half past nine o'clock at night, Mr. Ryland, one of Dr. Priestley's congregation, came with a chaise to Fairhill, and informed the family they must lose no time in effecting their escape. With nothing more than the clothes which they had on, the doctor and his family got into the chaise, and proceeded a mile further to Mr. Russel's; but here they were informed, that the mob had nearly destroyed Dr. Priestley's house, and would immediately proceed to that in which they then were. They therefore got into the chaise a second time, and drove to Mr. Hawkes's, half a mile further from the town. From this station they could distinctly hear every shout of the mob, and the blows of the instruments which were employed to break down the doors. The whole of the doctor's library, his valuable philosophical apparatus, his manuscripts and papers, were entirely and completely destroyed.

XLIV. The day broke on the succeeding morning only to discover the ruins which this insatuated multitude had made, and to enable them to continue their depredations. The next object of their vengeance was Mr. Ryland the friend of Dr. Priestly just mentioned, who

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elegant mansion at Easy-hill they quickly demolished.— Here, as they found a profusion of liquor, a shocking scene of intoxication ensued, and several of the wretched rioters perished in the cellars by suffocation, or by the falling in of the roof. Six, terribly bruised, were dug out of the ruins, and carried to the hospital; ten dead bodies were found; and one man remained for three days in one of the vaults, and then worked his way out with but little injury. It was in vain that the magistrates swore in an additional number of constables; the mob had by this time collected such strength, as baffled all attempts of the civil power to disperse them, and the constables, after supporting a severe conflict in which many of them were wounded, were compelled to retire.

XLV. Bordesley-hall, the country residence of John Taylor, esq. an eminent banker, was soon after assailed. The greater part of the furniture was plundered and carried away, and the house and out-offices set on fire. Every effort was made by captain Cuiver, a friend of Mr. Taylor's, to save the building, but in vain. Some of the plate and valuables were however ransomed; but on the captains offering them his purse with a hundred guineas to save the house, they exclaimed with one voice, "No bribery!" and it was with difficulty he escaped with his life. Several farm-houses also belonging to Mr. Taylor were burnt. On the same evening (being Friday) the house of Mr. Hutton the ingenious historian of Birmingham, was completely stripped. His books and papers were all destroyed. Fire was several times brought by women, but some of the mob, apprehensive of a general conflagration in the town, had the virtue to prevent it being applied. From this place they proceeded to Mr. Hutton's country-house at Washwood-heath, which they presently reduced to ashes.

XLVI. On the Saturday morning they made another attack on Mr. Humphrey's elegant house at Spark-brook, they were at first repulsed, and one man was killed. In a second attack they were more successful, and stripped the house of the whole of its furniture. Mr. Russell's

house at Showell-green was entirely consumed. Mr. Harwood's, and that of Mr. Hobson a dissenting minister, shared the same fate. The building of Mosely-hill, the residence of lady dowager Carhampton, but the property of Mr. Taylor, was completely demolished. Notice was given to lady Carhampton on the preceding day to remove her effects, as no part of their vengeance was directed against her, with which notice she prudently complied. The house of Mr. Hawkes of Mosleywake-green was on the same day stripped entirely of the furniture.

XLVII. The following morning the rioters proceeded to Kingwood, seven miles distant. In their way they committed numerous outrages, extorting money and liquor wherever they came. At Kingwood they burnt the dissenting meeting-house, and the house of the minister, and a little after the house, &c. of Mr. Cox farmer at Woodstock. In short, they were now so highly flushed with success, that they threatened the entire extirpation of the dissenters from that part of the country. Their authority and power were not, however, destined to be of long duration. The town of Birmingham was relieved from their depredations on the Sunday evening, by the arrival of three troops of the fifteenth of light dragoons. The town was now illuminated, and all was acclamation and joy. On the following morning they were reinforced by three troops of the eleventh regiment of dragoons under colonel de Lancey. During this time the mob was parading about the country, but its movements were now too rapid and uncertain to effect any formidable depredation. On Tuesday some reports were received of parties of rioters being seen near Hagley, Hales Owen &c. and towards evening intelligence arrived of their attacking Mr. Male's house at Belle-vue. A party of light dragoons was immediately dispatched in pursuit of them; but their numbers having been greatly diminished by desertion and other causes, the rioters were overpowered by the country people before the arrival of the soldiers, and ten of them confined at Hales Owen. T

Wednesday

Wednesday was employed by the light horse in scouring the country ten miles round Birmingham, and on Thursday the mob was thoroughly dispersed, and peace and order completely re-established.

XLVIII. In the course of these dreadful transactions, it was particularly observed that there was among the mob certain persons conspicuous equally for their appearance and activity (and by no means of the lowest class) who directed the rioters, and were sometimes termed their leaders. These villains were said not to be known to a single person at Birmingham or its neighbourhood, and, what is remarkable, have never yet been discovered.—The proper Birmingham mob were often persuaded to desist from their attempts, till they were joined by these men, who both instigated them to proceed, and directed them in the shortest and most effectual manner. Of the unfortunate and infatuated prisoners, who were taken in the act of rioting, seventeen were tried, and five found guilty; one of whom was reprieved, and four executed. Thus terminated those disgraceful scenes, which dishonor the national history. Posterity will scarcely credit, that the infant liberty of France could excite abhorrence in any order of Englishmen. To them it will appear equally astonishing that difference of opinion on points of speculative theology, could, at the close of the eighteenth century, generate a CHURCH AND KING MOB, to expel by Gothic fury from his native land—a man formed to enlarge the circle of human knowledge, an honor to his country, and an ornament of his age. These events will however furnish distant times with an instructive lesson. They will learn from them to estimate the evils resulting from ignorance, superstition, and intolerance. Such instances of error and depravity, at once inculcate and exemplify the important truth—that the diffusion of knowledge is the propagation of virtue, and that public virtue is the only solid basis of national peace, happiness, and glory.

CHAP.

C H A P. IV.

I. Meeting of Parliament—King's Speech. II. Mr. Pitt's Statement of the Revenue and Expenditure—flattering Picture of the Country. III. Motion for Papers relative to Oczakow by Mr. Grey—negatived. IV. Motion of Censure on the Ministry for fitting out an Armament against Russia by Mr. Whitbread—negatived. V. Similar Motion made in the House of Lords, by Earl Fitzwilliam—negatived. VI. Treaty between his Majesty and the King of Prussia on the Marriage of the Duke of York. VII. An Establishment voted for the Duke of York. VIII. Motion for an Abolition of the Slave Trade by Mr. Wilberforce. IX. Motion for a gradual Abolition by Mr. Dundas—carried. X. The gradual Abolition opposed in the House of Lords—the Decision delayed. XI. Westminster Police Bill, by Mr. Burton—passes. XII. New Forest Bill introduced by the Ministry—rejected. XIII. Mr. Rose's Trial for Mal-practices in Office—acquitted. XIV. Motion for a Reform in the royal Boroughs of Scotland, by Mr. Sheridan—negatived. XV. Motion for a Repeal of the penal Statutes against Dissenters, by Mr. Fox—negatived. XVI. Motion of Inquiry into the Cause of the Birmingham Riots, by Mr. Whitbread—negatived. XVII. Libel Bill of Mr. Fox—passes. XVIII. Bill in Favor of the Scottish Episcopals, by Lord Elgin—passes. XIX. The Society of the Friends of the People instituted to obtain a Parliamentary Reform. XX. Mr. Grey gives Notice of a Motion for a Reform in the Representation—alarms Ministers. XXI. Royal Proclamation against seditious Writings. XXII. Address of Thanks to the King, by both Houses—followed by others from all Parts of the Kingdom. XXIII. Mr. Dundas's Statement of the Revenues of India. XXIV. Indian War—Plan of the Campaign. XXV. The Reduction of Cannanore, by General Abercrombie. XXVI. Bangalore taken by Lord Cornwallis. XXVII. The Army under Lord Cornwallis arrives before Seringapatam—Soon obliged to retreat to Bangalore. XXVIII. The British Army arrives a second Time before Seringapatam. XXIX. Battle—Sultan defeated. XXX. Sues for Peace—granted—

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—granted—Terms. XXXI. *The Sultan's two Sons arrive at the British Camp as Hostages—Definitive Treaty signed.* XXXII. *Reflections.*

1792. I. **T**HE latter months of the year 1791 passed over in gloomy silence. The parliament was not convened till the thirty-first of January 1792. The king announced in his speech “the marriage of his son the duke of York with the princess Frederica, daughter of his good brother and ally the king of Prussia. He informed the two houses that a treaty had been concluded, under his mediation and that of his allies, between the emperor and the Ottoman Porte, and that in consequence of their intervention, preliminaries had been agreed upon between the latter of those powers and Russia. He lamented that he was not enabled to inform them of the termination of the Indian war, but hoped from the success which had already attended the bravery of the troops under lord Cornwallis, that it would soon be brought to an honorable conclusion. The general state of affairs in Europe promised a continuance of peace, and he was induced to hope for an immediate reduction of the naval and military establishments.” The address of thanks moved by Mr. Charles Yorke, and seconded by sir James Murray, excited some severe animadversions from Mr. Fox, who, in allusion to the cession of Oczakow to Russia, observed, “that it required no moderate share of assurance for ministers to say to gentlemen who had supported their measures as wise and necessary, ‘That which you last session contended for as of the utmost importance, we have now abandoned as of none. Will you have the goodness to move an address approving what we have done?’” Mr. Fox thought it extraordinary that, in mentioning the inestimable blessings of peace and order, no notice was taken of the violent interruption of order which had occurred in the course of the summer. At the close of the eighteenth century we had seen the revival of the spirit and practice of the darkest ages. It would have been well if his majesty had spoken of those riots in the terms they merited. They were not riots for bread—
—they

—they were not riots in the cause of liberty, which, however highly to be reprobated, had yet some excuse in their principle; they were riots of men neither aggrieved nor complaining—of men who had set on foot an indiscriminate persecution of an entire description of their fellow-citizens, including persons as eminent for their ability as blameless in their conduct, and as faithful in their allegiance as this or any country could boast.”

II. Mr. Pitt deprecated with warmth the invidious revival of a subject so unpleasant and unprofitable, and wished rather to call the attention of the house to the flourishing condition of the commerce and finances of the nation, of which in a short time he proposed submitting to the house a correct statement. Accordingly, in a few days after, the minister brought this subject regularly forward; and in the course of a most eloquent and animated speech, delineated a picture of national prosperity more flattering than even the most glowing imagination had ventured to suggest. “The amount of the permanent revenue, with the land and malt duties annexed, from January 1791 to January 1792, he estimated at sixteen million, seven hundred and thirty thousand pounds, being three hundred thousand pounds more than the aggregate of the preceding year. The permanent expenditure, including the interest of the debt, the annual million applied towards its extinction, the civil list, and the military and naval establishments, he calculated at fifteen million, eight hundred and ten thousand pounds, leaving a clear surplus of more than nine hundred thousand pounds. In this state of things he thought himself authorized to propose a repeal of a part of the more burthensome taxes, to the amount of about two hundred thousand pounds per annum; and at the same time apply the sum of four hundred thousand pounds, to the reduction of the national debt, in aid of the annual million appropriated by parliament. This would still fall far short of the national ability, and there was good ground to believe that we had not reached by many degrees the summit of our prosperity. When the debentures to the American loyalists should be discharged,

discharged, which would happen in about four years, an addition of near three hundred thousand pounds would accrue to the revenue. In consequence of the general improvement of credit, the three per cents would soon rise so high as to enable parliament to effect a reduction of the four, and, as soon as by law redeemable, of the five per cents, which would add the sum of seven hundred thousand pounds, or little less, to the sinking fund. The indefinite additions which might be expected from the increasing produce of the existing taxes, the result of our rapidly increasing commerce, must mock all calculation. Our exports had risen one third in value since the year 1783, and our internal trade had increased in at least an equal proportion. Thus shall we be enabled to make a swiftly accelerated progress in the essential work of liquidating the national debt, and in a very short space of time to reach a point which perhaps not long since was thought too distant for calculation. On the continuance of our present prosperity it is indeed impossible to count with certainty; but *unquestionably* there never was a time when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect a durable peace than at the present moment." After sporting his fancy, in developing the hidden and fruitful springs of returning prosperity, the minister concluded with the following memorable words: "From the result of the whole I trust I am entitled to infer, that the scene which we are now contemplating is not the transient effect of accident, not the short-lived prosperity of a day, but the genuine and natural result of regular and permanent causes. The season of our severe trial is at an end; and we are at length relieved, not only from the dejection and gloom which a few years since hung over the country, but from the doubt and uncertainty which, even for a considerable time after our prospect had begun to brighten, still mingled with the hopes and expectations of the public. We may yet indeed be subject to those fluctuations which often happen in the affairs of a great nation, and which it is impossible to calculate or foresee; but as far as there can be reliance on human speculations,

culations, we have the best ground from the experience of the past to look with satisfaction to the present, and with confidence to the future. *Nunc demum redit animus, cum non spem modo ac votum securitas publica, sed ipsius voti fiduciam et robur assumpserit.*" Such were the brilliant hopes which in this moment of ministerial exultation the people were taught to indulge, and with such dazzling but deceptive splendor rose the morn of a year destined to set in darkness, calamity and blood.

III. The next business of consequence that occupied the attention of parliament was the armament against Russia. The papers relative to this business being laid on the table, Mr. Grey noticed several material omissions, and an entire chasm in the correspondence from October the thirty first 1790, to May the twenty sixth 1791, and moved "that the papers thus withheld be laid before the house." Mr. Pitt affirmed that the papers called for by Mr. Grey were highly improper to be produced. He did not think it consistent with good policy, to disclose circumstances which might endanger the situation of our public alliances, and again urged the necessity of confidence in the executive government. Mr. Fox indignantly replied, "that the confidence of the nation was placed in their representatives, and if those to whom they had given their confidence should transfer that confidence to the minister, they were betrayed not represented. As to this pretended necessity of confidence, there need be nothing secret where there was nothing wrong; yet pending the negotiation with Russia they were kept in the dark, and, by a climax in confidence, when the negotiation was terminated, they were still denied information." In the course of the debate it was forcibly observed, in allusion to the projected war with Russia, "that it would require more eloquence than that which had lately been employed in describing the prosperity of this country, to justify a measure which put its prosperity so much to the hazard." The motion of Mr. Grey was negatived by a great majority.

IV. On the twenty seventh of February the business

of the armament was revived in the commons, and on the papers actually produced and the facts publicly ascertained, Mr. Whitbread moved a resolution of censure on the ministers, importing "that Oczakow was not an object of sufficient importance to justify the armed interference of this country." Mr. Whitbread said, "it was the most self-evident of all propositions, that no arrangement affecting Oczakow could in any way affect the political or commercial interests of Great Britain. We exported nothing thither, we imported nothing from it: the ostensible cause of the dispute could not therefore be the real cause. There was ground to believe the existence of a secret negotiation, by which Prussia flattered herself with the hope of obtaining Dantzic and Thorn as a compensation for permitting the empress of Russia to retain possession of Oczakow. It appeared that the empress had so early as December 1789 requested the interference of Great Britain to effect a peace upon the terms of extending her frontier to the Niester, and erecting the provinces of Moldavia, Bessarabia, and Wallachia into an independent principality, under a christian prince. These terms were refused by the court of London, and the empress was told that no attention would be paid to any terms not resting upon the basis of a *status quo*. At length, after blustering, threatening, and arming, came the humiliating memorial of the twenty-ninth of June 1791, which at once conceded all that we had negotiated, threatened, and armed to obtain." The motion was fully supported by Mr. Grey, who remarked, that "since the affair of Holland the minister had become intoxicated with power, and fancied he could parcel out kingdoms and provinces at his pleasure. He seemed as much delighted with this idea as Don Quixote with books of chivalry, and amused himself with curvetting in this court, dancing in that, menacing here, vaunting there—in a word, out-heroding Herod." Mr. Grey said, "that instead of that bold, candid, and manly conduct which our character demanded, our cabinet affected a species of low intrigue and petty policy, which formerly the En-

glish had reprobated and disdained: and after all," he added, "it must be confessed, that with all their resources in this business, both great Britain and Prussia had been humbled." As a further proof of the contemptible and odious light in which the British ministry were held, even by our allies the Turks, those allies whom we had promised to support and afterwards betrayed, Mr. Grey quoted the grand vizier's answer to sir Robert Ainslie, our ambassador at Constantinople, which contained the severest strictures on the conduct and character of our government ever conveyed through a diplomatic channel.* Mr.

Fox

* Mr. Grey read this very curious paper as part of his speech, and declared that he believed it to be authentic. "The grand signior wars for himself, and for himself makes peace---he can trust his own slaves, servants, and subjects---he knows their faith, has experienced their virtue, and can rely upon their fidelity: a virtue long since banished your corner of Europe. If all other christians tell truth, no reliance is to be had on England---she buys and sells all mankind. The Ottomans have no connection with your king nor your country---we never sought for your advice, your interference or friendship: we have no minister, no agency, no correspondence with you; for what reason offer ye then to mediate for us with Russia? Why seek to serve an empire of infidels, as ye call us Musselmén? We want not your friendship, aid, or mediation. Your vizier, of whom you speak so highly, must have some prospect of deception in view, some oppressive scheme to amuse your nation, who, we are told, are credulous, servile, and adorers only of money. Avarice, if we are well informed, is your chief characteristic---you would sell and buy your God---money is your deity---and all things is commerce with your ministry, with your nation. Come ye then to sell us to Russia? No, let us bargain for ourselves: when fate has spun out the thread of our good fortune we must yield; what has been decreed by God and the prophet of men must and will come to pass. We Ottomans know no finess---duplicity and cunning are your

Fox took a comprehensive view of the question, and dwelt with much energy and effect on the folly of making Oczakow a primary object of negotiation, and the inconsistency and disgrace of its subsequent abandonment.—
“Oczakow,” said he, “was every thing by itself, but

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your christian morals. We are not ashamed to be honest, downright, plain, and faithful in our state maxims. If we fail in war, we submit to the will of heaven, decreed from the beginning. We have long lived in splendor the first power on earth, and we glory in having triumphed for ages over christian infidelity and depravity, mixed with all sorts of vice and hypocrisy. We adore the God of nature, and believe in Mahomet. You neither believe in the God you pretend to worship, nor in his son, whom you call both your God and your prophet. What reliance can there be upon such a sacrilegious race? Truth you banish, as you do virtue, from all your conduct and actions with each other.--- Read the catalogue of complaints, manifestoes, declarations and remonstrances of all the christian kings, monarchs, and emperors, who have lived and warred with each other---you will find them all equally blasphemous, equally perfidious, equally cruel, equally unjust and faithless to their engagements. Did the Turk ever forfeit his promise, word, or honor? Never! Did ever a christian power keep an engagement but while it suited his own avarice or ambition? No! How then do you think we are to trust you, a nation at this moment, if you told truth, ruled by a *perfidious administration, without one grain of virtue to guide the machine of state?* The grand signior has no public intercourse with your court---he wants none---he wishes for none. If you wish to remain here either as a spy, or, you term yourself, an ambassador for your court, you may live with those of other christian nations, while you demean yourself with propriety; but we want neither your aid by sea nor land, nor your counsel nor mediation. I have no order to thank you for your offer, because it is by the divan deemed officious, nor have I any command to thank you for the offer of your naval assistance, because it is what the Port never

when ministers added to Oczakow the honor of England, it became nothing. Oczakow and honor weighed nothing in the scale. Honor is, in the political arithmetic of ministers, a *minus* quantity to be subtracted from the value of Oczakow. Against the vain theories of

dreamed of admitting into our seas. What *you* have to do with Russia we neither know nor care---our concerns with that court we mean to finish as suits ourselves, and the maxims of our laws and state policy. If you are not the most profligate christian nation, as you are charged to be, you are undoubtedly the boldest in presumption and effrontery, in offering to bring such a power as Russia to terms, such as you and some other trivial christians united fancy yourselves equal to command. We know better, and therefore this effrontery of yours amounts rather to audacity, and to an imbecile dictation, which must render your councils mean and contemptible, and your advice abroad unworthy of wisdom or attention from any power, much less the regard of the Port, which on all occasions wherein its ministers had listened to you have experienced evil, either in your designs or in your ignorance. His sublime highness cannot be too much upon his guard against the attempts and presumption of a nation so perfidious to the interests of its subjects. But it is the usual way of christian princes to sell and cede over their subjects to each other for money.--- Every peace made amongst you, as we are well informed, is made favorable to the king that best bribes.--- The Ottoman ministry have too long and too often given ear to European councils, and as often as they did, they either were betrayed, sold, or deceived--- *away then with your interference for the Port with Russia.*

It has been your aim to embroil all mankind, and thereafter to profit by your perfidy. We ask not, want not, nor desire your commerce, because our merchants have been sacrificed to your double dealings. You have no religion but gain---avarice is your only god, and the christian faith you profess but a mask for your hypocrisy. We will hear no more from you, therefore you are commanded to make no reply."

men who project fundamental alterations upon grounds of mere speculative objection, the constitution may be easily defended; but when they recur to facts, and shew me how we may be doomed to all the horrors of war by the caprice of an individual, who will not even condescend to explain his reasons, I can only fly to this house, and exhort you to rouse from your lethargy of confidence, into the active mistrust and vigilant control which is your duty and your office." On the division there appeared for the question 116, against it 244.

V. In the upper house a motion similar to that of Mr. Whitbread's was made by earl Fitzwilliam: it was opposed by the lords Grenville and Hawkesbury, the latter of whom expatiated largely on the ingratitude of Russia during the late war. Lord Rawdon thought the conduct of ministers in this business extremely culpable. "They had first laid on the table papers, said to contain all the documents which referred to the subject, but in which the keenest eye could perceive nothing that inferred any difference between the courts of London and Petersburg. He supposed ministers by recollecting themselves had at last discovered, that an armament must appear a daring and extraordinary step, if not a syllable expressive of dissatisfaction could be found in all this correspondence.—The noble secretary, therefore, laid other papers on the table, which by their dates ought to have been produced at first, but which after all suggest no pretext for plunging this country into a war. Of all the wretched policy of petty statesmen," his lordship said, "the most contemptible was that, which threatened all and performed nothing. This was fully exemplified in the conduct of our cabinet both in the Spanish and Russian dispute. Their conduct was exactly that which the old government of France had pursued; they were prying into every cabinet in Europe, and where they found amity and friendship, they sowed discord, and from a spark kindled a flame. Of this policy what was the result to France? It enabled them to attain petty ends at ten times their value, and to interrupt the harmony of their neighbours,

at the expence of permanent misery to themselves." The motion was however negatived by a majority of 82 to 19 voices.

VI. While the Russian armanent was still in agitation before the house, Mr. Pitt, on the seventeenth of February, presented a copy of the treaty between his majesty and the king of Prussia on the marriage of his royal highness the duke of York with the princess Frederica Charlotte Ulrique Catherine of Prussia. The substance of which was, I. That the king of Prussia gives to the princess his daughter one hundred thousand crowns, viz. forty thousand as a portion, and sixty thousand as paraphernalia; and in case the princess dies before her husband, both these sums are to revert to the king of Prussia and his successors. II. Their royal highnesses, and the king of Great Britain, as well in his own name, as for his son the duke of York, renounce for ever all right of inheritance to the crown and dominions of Prussia. III. The duke of York makes a present to her royal highness of six thousand pounds on the day of marriage, with interest from September 1791. IV. The duke of York agrees to pay to her royal highness, for pin money, the sum of four thousand pounds per annum, of which her royal highness is to have the sole disposal. V. The king of Great Britain pays a counter-portion of one hundred thousand crowns, and engages that in case of the death of his royal highness, the annual sum of eight thousand pounds, with a suitable residence, and suitable establishment, shall be provided for the princess. The sum of twenty two thousand pounds, which is the whole portion the king of Prussia gives to her royal highness, reverts back to Prussia in case of her death, but it deserves to be noticed, that there is no mention of the *counter-portion* returning to Great Britain in case of the same event.

VII. On the seventh of March the house of commons resolved itself into a committee, to take into consideration an establishment for their royal highnesses the duke and dutchess of York. Mr. Pitt opened the subject by observing, " that the particular satisfaction, which the public

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public had expressed on the marriage of their royal highnesses, rendered it unnecessary to trouble them with any remarks on that topic. The house was now called upon to make a suitable provision for their royal highnesses. The way in which he proposed this should be accomplished, would be, that *eighteen thousand* a year should be allowed them out of the consolidated fund; in addition to which, it was in contemplation that a farther sum of *seven thousand* a year should be allowed them out of the Irish revenue. Lastly, he should propose, that in the event of her royal highness surviving the duke, the jointure of eight thousand a year to her royal highness should be also payable out of the *consolidated fund*." The minister concluded with a motion to that effect. Sir James Johnstone said, "he thought the son ought to be dependent on the father—he mentioned Olinburgh, which from the best information he had obtained, produced," he said, "thirty five thousand pounds per annum; he wished therefore to know from authority exactly how much it was worth?" He was answered, "that such a question was *totally unparliamentary*, as that house never considered any thing belonging to princes out of the kingdom. Not a word was ever said of his majesty's revenue from Hanover; it was not *even thought of* in the discussion of his majesty's revenue, on his different applications to parliament for support." Mr. Burden thought the sum proposed was more than the country could afford, and more than was necessary for his royal highness to expend. He had therefore no hesitation in saying, he should have considered ten thousand pounds a sum sufficiently great. Several gentlemen were of the same opinion, and though it would no doubt have been *extremely unparliamentary* to mention it, it is highly probable that an alliance of this sort with the Prussian monarch's family was not considered as an event very auspicious to the peace and prosperity of Great Britain. After much desultory conversation, and, on a question of this kind idle opposition, the resolutions passed the house; by which these kingdoms stand pledged to grant an allowance of THIR-

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TY THOUSAND POUNDS per annum to their royal highnesses. Under this settlement therefore the allowance from the two nations will stand thus :

Prussia pays portion and paraphernalia	100,000	
crowns, or	-----	£.22,000
Great Britain pays counter-portion as before		22,000
Nuptial gift as before	-----	6,000
Annuity to their royal highnesses	£.37,000	
per annum, at fifteen years purchase		555,000
		<hr/> 583,000

VIII. On the second of April, the house resolved itself into a committee to consider of the state of the African slave trade. From the decision on Mr. Wilberforce's motion last session, it appeared that the enthusiasm of parliament for the abolition had greatly abated; while on the other hand that of the public in general had increased. The table of the house of commons was now covered with petitions from all parts of the kingdom, imploring in earnest language the abolition of that infamous and inhuman traffic. Mr. Wilberforce declared, "that from his exertions in this cause he had found happiness, though not hitherto success. It enlivened his waking and soothed his evening hours, and he could not recollect without singular satisfaction, that he had demanded justice for millions who could not ask it for themselves." He concluded an able and eloquent speech, by moving the question of abolition. Mr. Wilberforce was powerfully supported by many of the most respectable members of the house; amongst whom Mr. Whitbread particularly distinguished himself by the energy and animation of his remarks. "It was the necessary quality of despotism," he said, "to corrupt and vitiate the heart: and the moral evils of this system were still more to be dreaded than the political. But no mildness in practice could make that to be right which was fundamentally wrong. Nothing could make him give his assent to the original sin of delivering man over to the despotism of man. It was too degrading

to see, not the produce of human labor, but man himself, made the object of trade. He observed, that a fatality attended the arguments of those who defended this detestable and shocking trade. In an account of selling the stock of a plantation, one of the evidences in favor of the slave merchants said, 'that the slaves fetched less than the common price, *because they were damaged.*' Damaged!" exclaimed Mr. Whitbread, "what is this, but an acknowledgment that they were worn down by labor, sickness, by every species of ill treatment; and that instead of receiving the indulgence their situation requires, they are to be worked to death, transferred from one task-master to another, the latter perhaps more inhuman than the former! A trade attended with such dreadful evils ought not to be thought of—cannot be mentioned without horror, nor continued without violating every moral and religious obligation."

IX. In consequence of the ardor displayed by the nation at large in this business, it was at length determined to concede, what it was now become difficult, perhaps dangerous to withhold. Mr. Dundas, advanced to the dignity of secretary of state by the resignation of the duke of Leeds, and the organ of the interior cabinet in the house of commons, now recommended to the house, in a very plausible speech, the adoption of a middle and moderate plan, such as would reconcile the interests of the West India islands with the eventual abolition of the trade; and concluded by moving "that the word *gradual* might be inserted before *abolition.*" Mr. Pitt, who had done himself honor by his uniform and vigorous opposition to the slave trade, in conformity with his past sentiments, now declared his decided disapprobation of the amendment; and in a speech fraught with argument and eloquence, conjured the house not to postpone even for an hour the great and necessary work of abolition. "Reflect," said Mr. Pitt, "on the eighty thousand persons annually torn from their native land! on the connections which are broken! on the friendships, attachments, and relationships that are burst asunder! There is something

something in the horror of it that surpasses all the bounds of imagination. How shall we repair the mischiefs we have brought upon that continent? If, knowing the miseries we have caused, we refuse even now to put a stop to them, how greatly aggravated will be the guilt of Britain! Shall we not rather count the days and hours that are suffered to intervene, than to delay the accomplishment of such a work? I trust we shall not think ourselves too liberal, if we give to Africa the common chance of civilization with the rest of the world. If we listen to the voice of reason and duty, and pursue this right line of conduct which they prescribe, some of us may live to see the reverse of that picture from which we now turn our eyes with shame and regret. We may live to behold the natives of Africa engaged in the calm occupations of industry, in the pursuits of a just and legitimate commerce. We may behold the beams of science and philosophy breaking in upon their land, which at some happy period in still later times, may blaze with full lustre; and, joining their influence to that of pure religion, may illuminate and invigorate the most distant extremities of that immense continent. Then may we hope, that even Africa, though last of all the quarters of the globe, shall enjoy at length, in the evening of her days, those blessings which have descended so plentifully upon us in a much earlier period of the world—

*Nos primus equis oriens afflavit anhelis;
Illic fera rubens accendit lumina vesper.*

In this view, as an atonement for our long and cruel injustice to Africa, the measure now before the house most forcibly recommends itself to my mind. The great and happy change to be expected in the state of her inhabitants is, of all the various and important benefits of the abolition, in my estimation incomparably the most extensive and interesting." Mr. Fox supported the same side, with a force of argument and energy of expression, equally impressive and convincing. "The honorable gentleman who had proposed the amendment called himself," Mr. Fox said, "a moderate man; but he neither felt, nor wished

wished to feel any thing like moderation on the subject. The question before the house was simply this ; whether they should authorise by law the commission of crimes in Africa, which in this country would incur the severest penalties, and even an ignominious death ? Regulations, in this case, would be as disgraceful as they would be impotent. One gentleman had proposed a premium for the transportation of females. What ! exclaimed Mr. Fox, “ is the kidnapper then to be encouraged by the British legislature to lay a snare for the harmless maid—to snatch her from the arms of her lover or her parents—to separate the wife from her husband and children ? He should like,” he said, “ to see the clause by which this inhuman measure was to be presented to the parliament of England ; he should like to see the man capable of conceiving words to frame such a clause—was there a gentleman in the house bold enough to support it ? Last session,” said Mr. Fox, “ we were cajoled, and taught to believe that something would be early brought forward. Have we not passed a year, and nothing has been done ? Are we still to be deluded and betrayed ? Why was not the system of moderation proposed then ? Why were we not then entertained with this *mild* and *middle* course called *gradual abolition*.” To enforce the necessity of an immediate abolition, Mr. Fox proceeded to a statement of facts. “ A black trader,” he said, “ brought a girl to a slave ship for sale ; some person afterwards went on board and discovered who the trader was that sold her, and went and bought him to the ship and sold him for a slave. ‘ What,’ said the trader, ‘ do you buy me grand trader ? ’ ‘ Yes,’ replied the captain, ‘ I will buy you or any one else if offered for sale.’ On the first view of this fact it appears a piece of barefaced villany ; but on examining the subject it is evidently a necessary consequence flowing from the very nature of the trade. How could the captain know or decide who was the real owner of the girl ? He could only give in that instance the same answer that he must give in every other : ‘ I know not who has a right to sell, it is no affair of mine ; if any one offers me a slave,

slave, my rule is to buy him and ask no questions.' Were the objects of the trade brute animals," said Mr. Fox, "no man ought to expose them to be treated with such wanton cruelty—were they wholly inanimate, no honest man would engage in a trade founded manifestly on the principles of injustice!" The amendment of Mr. Dundas was nevertheless carried on the division by a majority of 68 voices. Accordingly he afterwards moved "that the importation of negroes into the British colonies should cease on the first of January 1800." This, on the motion of lord Mornington, was after great difficulty and debate altered to January the first 1796. A series of resolutions founded on this basis were then agreed to, and sent up to the lords for their concurrence.

X. In the upper house these resolutions were fated to meet a very cold reception; and from a large proportion of their lordships a most determined opposition. As this was a favorite measure with the nation, and had indeed been supported in a peculiar manner by the voice of the people, they were highly and justly offended to see the duke of Clarence, third son of the king, commence his public career with a violent declamation against the abolition, and invective against its advocates; whom he falsely and foolishly declared to be actuated by the spirit of political and religious fanaticism. With a view to protract, and if possible to dismiss the business, the lord chancellor sternly moved, "that evidence be heard, not before a select committee, according to the proposition of lord Grenville, but at the bar of the house." This was seconded by lord Hawkesbury, the well known and inveterate enemy of the abolition; of whom it has been affirmed with the most cutting keenness of sarcasm, "that in spite of the habitual fraud and falshood of his character, he is earnest and sincere in his contempt of virtue and hatred of freedom." The motion being carried, the house slept over the business during the remainder of the session.

XI. The next business of importance that came under the consideration of parliament, was the establishment of

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a new police for the city and liberty of Westminster. The bill for this purpose was introduced by Mr. Burton. The outline of his plan was, to establish five principal offices, to be always open for the administration of that branch of justice which falls within the jurisdiction of the justices of the peace. To each office three justices were to be appointed, with a salary of three hundred pounds each per annum. The fees paid into all the offices were to be consolidated into one fund, which was to be applied towards the discharge of the salaries; and in order completely to annihilate the odious name and functions of a trading justice, no person in the commission of the peace was to be permitted to receive fees. To unite personal security with general liberty; to preserve inviolate the rights of property; to repress the efforts of violence without establishing a system of tyrannical coercion, is among the most arduous labors of government and legislation. That the established system required some alteration, no person acquainted with the shameful prostitution of justice which prevailed, could possibly doubt: Yet the friends of freedom saw in the new system of regulation, principles, deeply hostile to the general liberties of the nation. They saw in it an alarming influence added to the executive power, which was the more dangerous for being near the seat of government: and they saw in one particular clause a deviation from that rule of justice, which for centuries had been esteemed the palladium of our constitution. By this clause, the constables were empowered to apprehend such persons as could not give a good account of themselves, and the magistrate to commit them as incorrigible rogues and vagabonds. Such a clause, it was asserted with justice, conferred on magistrates a power pregnant with abuse, and the low-class of the people on whom it would exclusively fall, seldom the means of applying for legal redress. As the professed design of this clause was to facilitate the recovery of a new species of criminals called *reputed thieves*, it was pointedly asked, what was the definition of a *reputed thief*? To punish men for acts which they

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had *not* committed, but for crimes which they *intended* to commit, was a new and dangerous principle in English law. Such a system was only calculated to protect the rich—to procure ease to their pleasures, and to guard the entrance to opera and play-houses. Besides this, the bill referred to another act, as the rule of punishment: the vagrant act was the statute alluded to, a statute sufficiently objectionable, both on account of its undefined extent, and the extreme severity of the punishments it inflicts. It was true there was an appeal allowed by this act to the quarter sessions, and the persons apprehended under the present clause might there be acquitted. But still the punishment they had suffered in the first instance could not be done away, nor the evils that resulted from their imprisonment remedied. Another well grounded objection to the bill was, that the party apprehending the reputed thief, should depose on oath that he was *deemed a thief*: a species of oath, which, if encouraged, would render perjuries familiar, and inevitably tend to extinguish in the mind every sense of the moral obligation of an oath. The general principle of the bill was also arraigned in strong terms. It was said that the system of our constitution required, that justice should be administered throughout the kingdom gratuitously; that the discretionary powers granted to justices of the peace were in many cases exorbitant, and were only endured in consideration of the persons on whom they were conferred.—Was it fit then to grant not only all these, but additional powers, to a new description of magistrates appointed by and receiving salaries from the crown? In a word, instead of a system of police, the present measure was considered as a system of influence; and on this principle the bill was opposed by Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Baker, in the commons; and supported by Mr. Burton, and Mr. Dundas: who admitted that the bill was not proposed as an absolute remedy for all the defects of the existing police, but as a measure calculated to discover the best mode of forming a system, which might approach as near perfection

as human infirmity would admit. It was a mere experiment, being limited in its duration, and at the expiration of the term proposed, parliament would be able to judge of its expediency. In the upper house, it was powerfully opposed by lords Loughborough and Rawdon; and supported by lords Sydney, Kenyon, Grenville, the lord Chancellor; and finally passed.

XII. Whatever might be the real intentions of ministry in the act just noticed, certain it is, that the measure was universally execrated by the people. But if his majesty's confidential servants are occasionally inattentive to the wishes and interests of the public, they at least make up for this defect, by being at all times sufficiently concerned for their own. As an instance of this characteristic disposition amongst innumerable others, a bill was about this period introduced into parliament for inclosing certain parts of the New Forest, under pretence of promoting the growth of timber. In the house of lords, this scheme met with the most unqualified censure from some of the most respectable peers of both parties. Lord Forcheester was pointedly severe upon Mr. Rose, and declared that it was a bill framed purely to serve him: he noticed the immense emoluments this gentleman already received from the public; the unprecedented number of secure places he enjoyed; and the alarming influence he possessed. The earl of Carlisle and lord Rawdon affirmed that the word *JOB* was the very mildest and most tender expression, that could be employed to describe this bill. The lord chancellor also condemned it in the strongest terms: he said, "*his majesty had been imposed on in the business; and that it was a precedent deeply affecting the constitutional situation of the crown.*" The ministry grounded their defence on a report of the commissioners of the land revenue, who had recommended an attention to the growth of timber in the kingdom. The bill was however withdrawn, though lord Grenville intimated that something of the kind would be introduced in the succeeding session.

XIII. If it is true, as the lord chancellor asserted, *that*
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his majesty had been imposed on the attack on the character of administration, which stands as the next parliamentary occurrence in point of order, seems to hold out a tolerable proof, that the secretary of the treasury had been concerned in more than one JOB of this description; and that he can exercise the same talent on the rights of the people, as well as on the prerogatives of the crown. In the course of the last summer a trial at bar had taken place between a publican of the name of Smith and Mr. Rose. The facts and circumstances ascertained by the evidence given on that trial were so daringly unconstitutional, that Mr. Thompson was introduced on the thirteenth of March to bring the business regularly before the house of commons. Mr. Thompson said, "that the substance of the evidence on the trial went to charge Mr. Rose with having interfered in the Westminster election in an unwarrantable manner." It appeared that Smith had some time before been convicted in a penalty of fifty pounds, for an offence against the excise laws; and that afterwards, in consequence of services performed by Smith in the course of the election, at the request of Mr. Rose, a part of the fine was remitted to him. In proof of what he alledged, Mr. Thompson proceeded to state the circumstances of a conversation between Smith and Mr. Rose, and which completely established the fact charged. "There could not possibly exist a doubt," he said, "about Mr. Rose having employed Smith in the election, as the jury had given a verdict in favor of the latter for the full amount of his bill." Mr. Thompson pressed the object of his motion upon the feelings of the house; and conjured them to reflect on the consequences of permitting a secretary of the treasury to employ the money of the public in supporting the election of a member of that house; and on the probable effects of suffering the people to understand that their money was corruptly expended in procuring seats for the friends of the minister. Mr. Thompson concluded by moving for the appointment of a committee to inquire into the abuses complained of. Mr. Lambton seconded

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ed the motion, and in support of the inquiry stated another fact of a similar nature with that mentioned by the mover. "In the year 1788," he said, "one Hoskins being at that time in prison, at the suit of the solicitor to the lottery for certain penalties incurred by offences against the lottery act, wrote to the solicitor informing him that he could procure fifty or sixty votes for lord Hood at the Westminster election, provided he could be admitted to bail, and that such bail as he could offer would not be objected to. The solicitor said, he could not do this on his own accord, but must have authority from a higher quarter. The man was afterwards admitted to bail, and his bail were the *most miserable and wretched ragamuffins that ever offered to commit a perjury*; indeed, so wretched were they, that when they came to take the necessary oaths before the judge at his chambers, though they brought a note from the solicitor signifying his consent, they were actually refused. The fact, however, in conclusion was, that their bail was taken, and Hoskins agreeable to his engagement polled sixty votes for lord Hood; since when, neither he nor his bail had ever been heard of. Mr. Lambton having stated this fact, observed, "that the public had paid seven hundred pounds out of their pockets to procure votes for lord Hood; and if ministers could, it suited their own convenience, suspend the operation of some laws, and remit the consequences of others, the freedom of the country was a shadow and not a substance." Mr. Rose, in his defence stated, "that the penalty in which Smith had been convicted was for brewing beer at home, and it appeared that this beer was no other than small beer for the use of his own family. That one third of the penalty went to the poor of St. Martin's parish; the rest to the king: that the vestry of that parish declared their willingness to remit their part of the penalty; that he had *only* referred Smith's petition to the board of excise to whose cognizance it properly belonged. He confessed, that during the time of the last general election, Smith came to him and made a proposition for buying his house, and declared he could detect a num-

ber of bad votes which had been given for lord John Townshend; when he answered—"do so if you can, it will be doing a good thing." Smith found the bad votes he had promised, and at length applied to him to be paid. His answer was, "go to lord Hood's committee, they will pay you." Smith, however, again demanded payment, commenced an action, and obtained a verdict.—With regard to the other charge respecting the admission of Hoskins to bail, by sham bail; Mr. Rose *protested*, "he had never before that day heard of the man's name." Mr. Grey contended, that there was ample ground for inquiry, notwithstanding the right honorable gentleman's defence. Mr. Rose had declared that he *only* transmitted Smith's petition to the board of excise, and *protested* he had no otherwise interfered. On the contrary, a letter from Mr. Rose to Smith was produced, inviting him to meet Mr. Vivian the solicitor to the excise, *on this business*, at his own house. With respect to Hoskins, whatever the right honorable gentleman might *protest*, the following facts were unquestionably established:—1. That Hoskins was under arrest for penalties incurred under the lottery act to the amount of seven hundred pounds and that during the election he offered to bring sixty votes, provided he was suffered to escape:—2. That the solicitor to the lottery, who was also agent for lord Hood, said he must consult *higher authority*:—3. That Hoskins was suffered to escape by two bails being accepted, who were not worth a shilling:—and 4. That lord Hood had since paid his agent's bill, in which there is this curious charge, "to the expence of finding bail for the action against Hoskins, who engaged to bring sixty votes, three pounds three shillings." Never, perhaps, were the present ministry reduced to a more perplexing dilemma than on this occasion. If, on the one hand, they granted the inquiry, it would lead to the discovery of scenes disgraceful to their reputation; and if they have terminated in the conviction of Mr. Rose: and, on the other hand, to refuse an inquiry in the face of facts so completely substantiated, would amount to a tacit acknowledgment

knowledge of the indefensibility of their cause. Perceiving, therefore, that the powers of eloquence would weigh little against the argument of facts, Mr. Pitt contented himself with saying, that he should oppose the inquiry "because there was no one public officer against whom in this business a *direct* charge could be fixed," and, to the astonishment of the whole nation, the minister, by resorting to the unanswerable logic of numbers, was able, in a full house, to dismiss the motion by a division of 221, against 84 voices.*

XIV. The ease with which the minister was able to command so large a majority, in a case which the public deemed completely desperate, proved to a demonstration, that an influence existed somewhere, totally incompatible with the purity of representation, and that called loudly for a reform in the commons house of parliament. But

* Mr. Fox having brought an action for debt against Mr. Horne Tooke, in consequence of the petition presented by the latter to the house of commons, having been voted frivolous and vexatious; the defendant, in his defence delivered on the trial, and since published, advances the following weighty charges against the ministry. "The expence of the election of lord Hood was partly paid by persons in office, at a sort of regular percentage on their places and profits. Of the higher orders the duke of Richmond paid five hundred pounds; the duke of Newcastle paid five hundred pounds; those in the next degree of office paid three hundred pounds each: and the lords of the admiralty one hundred and fifty pounds each; but there were some exceptions: I could take the list out of my pocket and read them to you. They may have their objections or informations against me, if they please; and I have no objection to a trial on the question. I can prove the fact. As the rest of the money was furnished by the SECRETARY of the TREASURY, he best can tell from whence it came." If the authenticity of this statement is admitted, the minister's assertion, "that a *direct* charge could not be fixed on one public officer," is not only totally unfounded, but the policy of resisting the inquiry is placed in a strong point of view, and easily comprehended. if

if this transaction proves the necessity of reform, the one about to be stated, will as clearly shew the improbability of procuring the consent of the legislature to such a measure. On the eighteenth of April, Mr. Sheridan made his long expected motion for an inquiry into the grievances complained of by petition from the royal boroughs of Scotland. The petitions set forth the general mismanagement, misapplication of money, dilapidation of property, and various injuries and grievances sustained by the petitioners, in consequence of the usurped authority of certain self-elected magistrates in these boroughs, and that to these complaints there was at present no redress to be obtained under the law of Scotland. "It had been observed," Mr. Sheridan said, "that there were such grievances in England as well as in Scotland: but was this any reason for giving redress to neither? Was justice to be defeated by a community of oppression? Of late it had become a fashion to decry every thing in the shape of reform. It was carried so far as to be made a principle in support of universal oppression. It was, however, the best part of our constitution, that it contained a principle of reform in its very nature, and we had at this day nothing in it that was beautiful, that had not been forced from tyrants, and taken from the usurpations of despotism. Some persons," said Mr. Sheridan, "seem to think that the French revolution should deter us from thinking of reform. Whatever might be the conduct of the parties concerned in that revolution," he affirmed, "that with regard to the event itself, there could be but one feeling upon the subject: exultation and joy at the downfall of the despotism of France, the greatest enemy England ever had. That despotism, whose ambitious, restless, and turbulent spirit, had cost England so many thousands of her subjects, and so many millions of her money: that despotism, which had long disturbed the happiness of the human race, was completely destroyed. The national assembly," he said, "were the best committee of supply England ever had. The safety of our possessions in India was owing to the French revolution,"

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tion, and therefore to us it had proved a blessing. By assuring us of tranquillity abroad, it afforded us leisure to look into abuses at home, and enabled us to proceed without being intimidated into a dangerous compliance of popular clamor on the one hand, or too ready to listen to the fears of the timid on the other. Such was the lesson to correct abuses; and what was the lesson which the revolution of France afforded to this country? Obviously this, that we ought to attend to a rational and sober reformation of abuses, at a time when there was nothing to interrupt us: this was the only way of avoiding the evils with which a reformation by violence might be attended. He must say, therefore, to the house, that unless they meant to tell the people that their rights were entirely neglected, and that they had no friends in the house of commons, they would yield redress when fairly claimed." The motion was ably supported by Mr. Fox, and strongly opposed by the lord advocate, by Mr. Dundas, Mr. Anstruther, and Mr. Rolle. The last gentleman declared, "that his regard for the constitution led him to oppose every motion for reform that had been or should be brought forward; and as long as he held a seat in parliament, he was determined never to countenance any species of reform whatever." Impressed with conviction by the force of this irresistible argument, the house divided on the motion for a committee, ayes 27, noes 69.

XV. Mr. Pitt, in his speech on the motion for a repeal of the test, having, in an *unguarded moment*, avowed in the most unequivocal terms the right of the dissenters to a full and complete toleration; Mr. Fox embraced the opportunity of bringing forward in the course of this session a motion for the repeal of those penal statutes, which, notwithstanding the existence of the toleration act, were still in force against those who in any manner impugned the doctrine of the TRINITY. He shewed from a specification of authentic facts, "that these laws were far from being a mere dead letter. Not to mention the hatred and obprobrium which they were the means of creating, such was the wretched bigotry fostered and cherished by these laws,

laws, that a bishop of the church (DR. HORSLEY) had not scrupled, in a recent publication, to declare 'that unitarianism being *heresy*, even the moral good of the unitarians was sin.' Mr. Fox expressed his ardent wish to extirpate heresy by *fire*, not indeed in the old mode of burning heretics, but by burning all those statutes which formed the code of persecution. Mr. Pitt appeared on this occasion considerably embarrassed, and rested his opposition chiefly on the disuse and oblivion into which the acts in question had fallen, and the dangerous alarm which might be excited by the repeal—disclaiming in warm terms the principles and character of a persecutor. Mr. Fox in reply remarked, that he knew not how to distinguish between a persecutor and an advocate for penal laws in matters of religion, which was the precise definition of the term. As to the general alarm, of which Mr. Pitt was apprehensive, it was the bitterest satire upon the spirit of his own administration, to suppose the temper of the public so fatally changed, as not to endure the repeal of laws so execrable, and till a recent period so generally the subject of execration. The motion was rejected by a majority of 79 voices.

XVI. On the twenty-first of May, Mr. Whitbread brought forward a motion of inquiry on the subject of the Birmingham riots. He introduced his motion by an excellent speech, containing a copious statement of the facts and circumstances which led to a suspicion, that the magistrates had been most culpably remiss in their duty on this occasion; and even that ministers had been negligent in their exertions for the suppression of those disorders. Mr. Whitbread referred the house to the proceedings of a former house of commons, who, on a similar occasion, in 1716, had addressed the king in terms expressive of the utmost indignation and abhorrence of the spirit which had incited those atrocious outrages; and requesting that full compensation might be made to the sufferers. Mr. Whitbread insisted on the disgrace which England would incur in the view of Europe, if a man who had done so much honor to his country by his philo-

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philosophical and literary talents as Dr. Priestley, should fail to obtain a signal reparation for the injuries he had sustained. "Should he," said this animated speaker, "by the spirit of persecution be compelled to abandon his native soil, there is no nation which would not be ready and eager to offer him an asylum. He can go to no country where his fame has not gone before him." Mr. Whitbread said, "he knew toleration was the language in fashion, but it was very easy for men to have toleration on their lips, and persecution in their hearts." Mr. Secretary Dundas, in reply, vindicated government from the suspicion of not having exerted themselves to the utmost in quelling the riots. He said, "that government did not prosecute the magistrates who were charged with neglect of duty, because the attorney general was of opinion, that there was no probability of conviction, and an ineffectual prosecution might be attended with very disagreeable consequences." The motion of Mr. Whitbread was ably and eloquently supported by Mr. Grey, who, in answer to some harsh reflections of Mr. Dundas on the recent conduct of the dissenters, thus forcibly expressed himself: "I do not, sir, stand here as the professed advocate of the dissenters; but whilst we exclaim against the rash and intemperate language of some amongst the dissenters, let us impartially and seriously ask ourselves, if a just cause has been given to them of discontents, or of resentment? It is well known that the dissenters have ever distinguished themselves as the zealous advocates of the glorious revolution—that they have been always numbered amongst the firm and steady adherents of the protestant succession, and of the illustrious house of Hanover, when that succession was supposed with reason to be in danger; and at a time when the reigning family did not depend upon the church as its chief bulwark and support. Conscious of their fidelity and attachment to the government under which they lived—an attachment which the circumstances of the times afforded them frequent and successive occasions to demonstrate—exercising under the express sanction of the state their inherent right of private judgment

judgment in religion—they at length applied to the legislature to be restored to the privileges of citizens, of which they had been so long unjustly divested. When this claim was refused with every circumstance of indignity and insult—when they were branded as the implacable enemies of the state—when they were reproached, notwithstanding their uniformly peaceable demeanor, as seditious and factious hypocrites—when the ridiculous and obsolete Tory clamor was revived, that the *church was in danger*—when they were told ‘that the extent of their loyalty might be measured by the blood of a king’—can we wonder that they should discover the passions and feelings of men? that anger should beget anger—that in the collision of zeal against zeal, the voice of reason should be overborne and lost? Are we really desirous of establishing universal and permanent content and satisfaction? The experience of all ages shews, that the only effectual mode is to annihilate all legal oppression. While the spirit of intolerance predominates in the councils of any country, there will necessarily be discontent, resentment and anger. And it is in vain to expect to obviate the evil consequences of such a system, or to re-establish the general tranquillity, by adding contumely to oppression, or by an attempt to defend injustice by falsehood. We are ourselves zealously attached to the constitution, because we enjoy in their full extent the privileges and immunities derived from it. But what right have we to expect the same attachment from those who are excluded from these privileges? Though to us the constitution is the object of affection and reverence, to them whom it injures and oppresses it is an odious and tyrannic constitution. Wherever political partialities prevail, and political distinctions injuriously admitted, *there* political animosities will be excited. Such is the nature of man; and of this we may rest assured, that equity is the only safe and permanent basis of policy: and till we determine to regulate our conduct by this principle, discontents and animosities must and will prevail. And the disorders and commotions which we now lament, are the genuine offspring of the policy

policy to which unhappily for our peace and security we are still resolved to adhere." The motion was finally negatived by a great majority.

XVII. The libel bill introduced in the last session by Mr. Fox, and which was lost in the house of lords, was this session triumphantly carried through both houses, and passed into a law, notwithstanding the violent opposition of the law lords Thurlow, Kenyon, and Bathurst. The marquis of Lansdowne was pointedly severe upon the judges. He said, "that the act which declared the judges independent of the crown, would, in fact, be found to render them totally independent of the people, and more than ever dependent on the crown. Before the revolution the judges took no part in politics, or in the debates of that house; now they were of great weight in every discussion, and occupied so much of the time, that noble lords could hardly obtain an opportunity of speaking. For what they knew, they might have a chief justice at the head of a party in that house, going down, seeking with party rage to preside on a trial for a libel published against himself by some political adversary. For his own part, his lordship declared, he could not come to his mind a case in which juries did not appear fully competent to decide conscientiously on the law and the fact blended, as the twelve judges. He did not blame the lawyers for making a stand against the present bill. It was well worth a struggle on the part of the profession. It was a proud ambitious profession, desirous of retaining power over all. And if the noble lord at the head of the king's bench could overthrow it, as his lordship had studied politics as well as law, he would reign lord paramount of England." The law lords joined in a protest against the bill, which will remain as a perpetual monument of the triumph of equity and common sense, over legal quirk and professional subtilty.

XVIII. Another point was also gained during this session in favour of the general system of freedom, by a bill introduced into the house of peers by lord Elgin, to relieve the Scottish episcopalians from the heavy penalties

to which they had been long subject. Their warm attachment to the Stuart family rendered them notoriously disaffected to the revolution settlement: but now that the pretender was dead, they found no more difficulty than other *high flying* jacobitical Tories of excelling even the loyal in loyalty. An objection however was started by the lord chancellor, whether, according to a clause in the present bill, specifying the description of persons to be relieved, the state could with propriety recognize the validity of ordination by bishops exercising their functions independent of the state. And in his profound knowledge in ecclesiastical antiquity, his lordship ventured even to intimate his doubts, whether bishops could *exist* in any christian country not authorized by the state. But his lordship being assured by the bishop of St. David's, who spoke in favor of this "afflicted part of the church of Christ," that christian bishops *existed* three hundred years before the happy alliance between church and state took place, under the emperor Constantine the great, his lordship was pleased to declare himself satisfied, and the bill passed without any farther opposition.

XIX. Though the various attempts made in the house of commons to obtain a parliamentary reform, had uniformly proved unsuccessful, they were yet far from being unproductive of effects, as they provoked discussions tending to make those very evils more *apparent*, which the legislature peremptorily refused to *remedy*. From this source, and from the knowledge conveyed through a number of popular tracts on the subject, the public mind was at this period completely informed of the defects of our representative system. In consequence of this general diffusion of knowledge, a number of political societies were formed for the purpose of procuring a reform in parliament. One of these societies, composed chiefly of tradesmen, assumed the title of the LONDON CORRESPONDING SOCIETY, and adopted in its full extent the celebrated system of reform recommended by the duke of Richmond, resting on the basis of UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE and ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS. But though the fate of this society

distinct to occupy a conspicuous part in the subsequent history of England, there was another formed at this time, which, of all others, attracted most the attention both of government and the nation. The society alluded to, known by the name of the **FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE**, adopted those principles of reform which Mr. Pitt had once supported, and which had been sanctioned by the approbation of the most distinguished advocates for constitutional liberty. About thirty members of parliament entered their names as members of this association, which also comprehended many of the most eminent characters in the kingdom, whether in respect of political or literary ability. After publishing a manly declaration of their sentiments, the society came to the resolution, that early in the next session a motion of reform should be brought forward in parliament, and that the conduct of the business in the house of commons should be committed to Mr. Grey and Mr. Erskine, both of whom were members.

XX. In conformity with the views of this society, Mr. Grey, on the thirtieth of April, gave notice of his intention to move, in the course of the ensuing session, for an inquiry into the state of the representation. He had scarcely concluded this intimation, when Mr. Pitt rose with unusual vehemence to reprobate the measure. "Nothing could," he said, "be whispered on this subject which did not involve questions of the most extensive, the most serious, the most lasting importance to the people of this country, to the very being of the state. He felt no difficulty in asserting, in the most decisive terms, that he objected both to the time and the mode in which this business was brought forward. He would confess that, in this respect, he had changed his opinion upon this subject, and he was not ashamed to own it. He retained his opinion of the propriety of a parliamentary reform, if it could be obtained by a general concurrence, pointing unflinchingly at its object. But he was afraid, at this moment, that if agreed to by that house, the security of all our blessings we enjoyed would be shaken to the foundation. The present, he asserted, was not a time to make

hazardous experiments. Could we forget what lessons had been given to the world within a few years? Could it be supposed that men felt the situation of this country, as contrasted with that of others, to be deplorable? He then noticed the association of the FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE, and its advertisements, inviting the public to join the standard of reform. He saw with concern the gentlemen to whom he alluded, united with others, who professed not reform only, but direct hostility to the very form of our government, who threatened the extinction of monarchy, hereditary succession, and every thing which promoted order and subordination in a state. To his last hour he would resist every attempt of this nature, and if he was called upon either to hazard this, or for ever abandon all hopes of reform, he would say he had no hesitation in preferring the latter alternative." The moderation of Mr. Fox's language on this occasion afforded a striking contrast to the vehemence of the minister. He reminded the house "that he had never professed to be sanguine on this subject as the right honorable gentleman, but although less sanguine, he happened to be a little more consistent; for he had early in public life formed an opinion of the necessity of a parliamentary reform, and remained to this hour convinced of that necessity, and the obvious reason was, that the proceedings of the house were sometimes at variance with the opinion of the public. Of the truth and justice of this sentiment, he said it was only necessary to refer to a recent instance, the Russian armament. The declaration of that house was that we should proceed to hostilities. The declaration of the people was, that we should not: and so strong was that declaration, that it silenced and awed the minister with his triumphant majority. What was the consequence? That the people of England were at this moment paying the expence of an armament for which they never gave their consent; and as far as that goes, they pay their money for not being represented, and because their sentiments were not spoken within the walls of the house. It was the doctrine of implicit confidence in the

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minister that disgusted the people; a confidence not given to him from the experience of his probity and talents, but merely because he was minister: and whatever calamities he may bring upon the country, no inquiry into his conduct will be granted. As to the obnoxious allies of the late associators, the objection might be completely retorted by asking the minister, who have you for your allies? On our part there may be infuriated republicans, on yours there notoriously are the slaves of despotism. The first are the rash zealots of liberty, the latter its inveterate and determined enemies: both of them unfriendly perhaps to the constitution; but there is no comparison between them in point of real hostility to the spirit of freedom." Mr. Sheridan, among other arguments in favor of reform, observed, "that sixty or seventy peerages had been created under the present administration, for no distinguished abilities, for no public services, but merely for their interest in returning members of parliament. Here peerages had been bartered for election interest; in the sister kingdom they had been all but proved to have been put up to auction for money. The minister failing in his proposition of adding one hundred members to the house of commons, had almost added as many to the house of peers. In his public letter to Mr Wyvill, he professed himself a friend, both as a man and minister to parliamentary reform, and pledged himself to pursue it till it was accomplished. What had since happened to change his opinion? He had been eight years a minister, and as he could with tolerable ease command majorities, he found he could do without it." Mr. Sheridan remarked, "that an honorable gentleman (Mr. Powis) had called upon all who thought as he did, to protest against the measure. In this he had done wisely; for to protest was easier than to argue."

XXI. The consternation of the ministers evidently appeared by a ROYAL PROCLAMATION almost immediately issued against the public dispersion of all seditious writings, and against all illegal correspondencies, exhorting magistrates to vigilance, and the people to submission and obedience. This proclamation being laid before the

house May the twenty fifth, and an address moved of approbation and support, it was warmly opposed by Mr. Grey, and the proclamation itself condemned in severe terms as an insidious and pernicious measure. Mr. Grey declared, "that he scarcely knew how to express himself upon it; because he hardly could distinguish whether the sentiments which gave birth to it were more impotent or malicious. He mentioned the association of the Friends of the People, and complained that the minister, apprehensive of its effects, had concerted this measure, with an insidious view of separating those who had been long connected.—No man was ever more delighted with these sinister practices than the right honorable gentleman.—He, whose whole political life was a constant tissue of inconsistency, of assertion and retraction—He, who never proposed a measure without intending to delude his hearers; who promised every thing and performed nothing; who never kept his word with the public; who studied all the parts of captivating popularity without even intending to deserve it; and, who from the first step of his political life, was a complete public apostate. If any writings were published that ought not to have appeared, his majesty's ministers ought to have prosecuted the authors, printers, or publishers. Upwards however of a year had elapsed since the publications now complained of made their appearance. What could they now say for themselves, or what could the public think of the conduct of his majesty's ministers, who had suffered these publications, which were said to be the bane of the public tranquillity, to poison the minds of the people for a whole year?" He wished to know "what could be the motives that brought forward, at this time, this sudden show of ardor to subdue disorder—Had it always manifested itself in the conduct of ministers? Was there any remarkable activity displayed in preserving order in the affairs of Birmingham, where there had been actual outrage and violence to the laws, to liberty, and order." He remarked as one of the objects of this proclamation, "that the king's officers, his commissioners of the peace, and his magistrates

trates, were to make diligent inquiry in order to discover the authors and publishers of wicked and seditious writings. In other words, a system of espionage was to take place by order of the crown. The very idea was surprising as well as odious, that a proclamation should issue from the sovereign of a free people, commanding such a system to be supported by spies and informers."

XXII. Mr. Pitt expressed his respect for many of the members of the association in question, declaring, "that he differed from them only in regard to the time and mode which they had adopted for the attainment of their object. The association of the friends of the people," he said, "did not come within the scope and purview of the proclamation, which was levelled against the daring and seditious principles which had been so insidiously propagated amongst the people, under the plausible and delusive appellation of the rights of man." The address was finally carried without a division, and receiving the concurrence of the upper house, was presented in form to the king. It was followed by addresses from all parts of the kingdom: and the ministry, finding their strength, commenced prosecutions against a vast number of offenders, amongst whom Thomas Paine stood most conspicuous: and who, notwithstanding the professional ability of Mr. Starkine, whom he had engaged as his advocate, was found guilty of the charge; but foreseeing the probability of this event, he had previously absconded to France.

XXIII. On the fifth of June, Mr. Dundas brought forward his statement of the revenue and finances of India; and by an intricate deduction of figures, he attempted to prove the surplus of the Bengal revenue for the preceding year to be no less than eleven hundred thousand pounds. The flourishing state of the revenue was, however, remarked by Mr. Francis to be not precisely the same thing with the flourishing state of the country, which might be ill able to bear the weight of these impositions. The seizures for non-payment of the land revenue were, he said, most alarmingly notorious:

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and he held in his hand, at that moment, two Bengal advertisements, the one announcing the sale of seventeen villages, the other of forty-two. The rest of the debate consisted chiefly in desultory conversation concerning the Indian war. As that subject however soon afterwards assumed a new aspect, by the fortunate termination effected by lord Cornwallis, a detail of the principal events of the war from its commencement to the peace concluded in March 1792, is of more importance, and has therefore a stronger claim on attention.

XXIV. The actual commencement of hostilities may be dated from the engagement between the troops of the Rajah of Travancore, stationed at Cranganore for the defence of that fortress, with those of Tippoo Sultan on the first of May 1790. This event, which was expected by our government and probably concerted with them, was the signal for a most vigorous preparation for war on the part of the British. The grand Carnatic army assembled immediately in the southern provinces. The general plan of the campaign was to reduce the Coimbatore country, and all the adjacent territory which lay below the Gauts, or narrow passes between the mountains, and to advance by the Gujelhetty pass to the siege of Seringapatam, the metropolis of Mysore. While such were to be the operations of the grand army under general Meadows, the Bombay army under general Abercrombie was to undertake the reduction of the country lying to the west of the Gauts, and afterwards to co-operate with the main army, as circumstances might direct. In the mean time the safety of the Carnatic was secured by a force under colonel Kelly, and styled from its position the centre army, being stationed in the line between Madras and the passes leading to Mysore. The Poonah Mahrattas and the Nizam, were respectively to penetrate the enemy's territory in the quarter bordering upon theirs; and Seringapatam was established as the common centre, where the whole force was to appear as a collective body.

XXV. The reduction of Cannanore was general
Abercrombie

Abercrombie's first object, which after having effected, and seized several other places on the coast, he entered the kingdom of Mysore; which, notwithstanding the pretended oppression of the government, exhibited every where marks of the highest cultivation and prosperity. The sultan defending himself with great resolution, and no mean display of military skill, general Meadows found himself under the necessity of retreating to the vicinity of Madras; where in the month of December 1790, lord Cornwallis assumed the command of the army in person.

XXVI. The plan of the war was now considerably changed, and a grand effort resolved on, to force a passage to Seringapatam through the country lying directly westward of Madras. On the twenty second of February the army had marched beyond the pass of Muglee without interruption; and on the twenty-fourth, lord Cornwallis proceeded to Bangalore. After three days march, some parties of the enemy's horse were discovered, which increased as the army advanced; and before the British reached within eighteen miles of Bangalore, they burnt all the adjacent villages and destroyed the forage. When advanced within ten miles, the sultan's army appeared in excellent order, and having taken possession of the heights, cannonaded the British rear, while his cavalry made an unsuccessful attempt on the baggage. The British general encamped before Bangalore on the fifth of March. On the same day colonel Floyd, being dispatched with part of the cavalry to reconnoitre, was tempted to attack Tippoo's rear, which at first appeared to give way, but being quickly reinforced, the enemy soon rallied, and compelled the colonel to retreat. On the following day the Petta or town was stormed and taken, with the loss of one hundred men. On the twelfth, three batteries were opened on the fort, but they were too distant to effect a breach; on the sixteenth, therefore, a new battery of nine guns was opened at five hundred and fifty yards from the works. On the twenty first the fort was stormed and taken with little loss to the British, but with a dreadful carnage of the unresisting garrison: not less than

than one thousand were massacred with the bayonet, and three hundred, mostly wounded, were taken prisoners.

XXVII. On the thirteenth of May, the army, by extraordinary exertions, arrived in view of the superb capital of Mysore, defended by the sultan in person: such were the rapid movements of lord Cornwallis, that Tippoo had only reached the place four days before his lordship came in sight. On the next day an action took place, in which Tippoo was said to be defeated; though he does not appear to have sustained any very considerable loss. The swelling of the river Cavery, which surrounds Seringapatam, together with the want of provisions, compelled lord Cornwallis to begin his retreat to Bangalore, almost before his victory could be announced. General Abercrombie, who had advanced through the Gauts on the opposite side, with a view to form a junction with lord Cornwallis, was now also obliged to lead back his army, fatigued, harassed and disappointed, over the mountains they had so lately and with such difficulty passed. During these transactions the troops of the Nizam and the Mahrattas kept discreetly aloof, leaving the burthen of the war almost entirely to the British. While the army lay encamped near Seringapatam, a present of fruit was sent from Tippoo to lord Cornwallis, and some overture for a separate peace: the present was however returned, with an assurance to the sultan, that no peace could be accepted that did not include the allies. Notwithstanding this disappointment, so solicitous was Tippoo for peace, that lord Cornwallis had scarcely reached Bangalore when a vakeel arrived with full powers to treat; but owing, it is said, to some informality in point of etiquette rather than to any dislike of the object of his mission, all negotiation was suspended.

XXVIII. Though this campaign was not attended with the success expected, the next, for which lord Cornwallis made unremitted preparations, opened under more favorable auspices. Early in February, 1793, the eastern and western armies, resuming their former plan of operations, effected a junction under the walls of Seringapatam.

Chapatam: the forces of the Peishwa and of the Nizam encamping also at a small distance, and furnishing to the British army a plentiful supply of stores and provisions. The sultan was strongly posted to receive them: his front line, or fortified camp, which was situated on the north side of the Cavéry behind a strong bound hedge, was defended by heavy cannon in the redoubts, and by his field train and army stationed to the best advantage. In the front there appeared at least a hundred pieces of cannon, and in the fort and island, which formed his second line, there were three times that number.

XXIX. The British commander did not suffer his troops to enjoy a long repose in this station; for, on the sixth of February, general orders were issued, directing an attack upon the enemy's camp and lines that evening at seven o'clock. The right division, consisting of three thousand three hundred infantry, was commanded by general Meadows; the center, consisting of three thousand seven hundred, by lord Cornwallis in person; and the left, which only amounted to one thousand seven hundred, by lieutenant-colonel Maxwell. At eight o'clock the whole body was under arms; the evening was calm and serene; and the troops moved on by the light of the moon in grand and awful silence. Between the hours of ten and eleven at night, the center column, within a mile of the bound hedge, met the enemy's grand guard, or body of cavalry, who were coming with rockets, &c. to disturb the British camp. Perceiving themselves now completely discovered, the column advanced with uncommon rapidity, and entered the lines in less than a quarter of an hour after the intelligence could have reached the enemy. The right column met with greater obstructions; for being led to a more distant point than was intended by lord Cornwallis, it was considerably later in reaching the hedge than the center column. The battle, however, became general throughout the enemy's lines at eleven, and continued till day-break, when the British had completely disconcerted the sultan's position, and obtained other signal advantages. The battle was continued

continued in different parts during the whole of the seventh. The most desperate conflict took place at the sultan's redoubt, which was defended by a small party of British under major Kelly, against three vigorous attacks, seconded by a heavy cannonading from the forts. The enemy having quitted every post on the north side of the river, the camp was advanced on the succeeding days as near to the bound hedge as the guns of the fort would permit, and a chain of connecting posts along the northern and eastern sides of the fort was formed, and thus the capital of Mysore was completely invested on its two principal points.

XXX. Thus pressed in every quarter—his palace and beautiful gardens in possession of the enemy—his whole power reduced within the narrow limits of a citadel, the defence of which was even doubtful—the hitherto unsubdued spirit of the sultan seems to have given way with his tottering fortunes, and peace, upon almost any terms, was become a desirable object. As a preliminary step towards an accommodation, he released Lieutenants Chalmers and Nash, who had been taken prisoners, and on their departure presented them with two shawls and five hundred rupees. Soon after he dispatched a rakel to the camp of lord Cornwallis, to sue for peace, which the British general at last granted upon the following terms, 1. Of his ceding one half of his dominions to the allied powers: 2. Of paying three crores and thirty lacks of rupees, as an indemnification for the expenses of the war: 3. The release of all prisoners: and 4. The delivery of two of his sons as hostages for the due performance of the treaty.

XXXI. On the twenty-sixth of February the two princes, each mounted on an elephant, richly caparisoned, proceeded from the fort to lord Cornwallis's camp, where they were received by his lordship with his staff. The eldest, Abul Kalik, was about ten, the youngest Mooza-ud-Deen, about eight years of age. The princes were attired in white muslin robes, with red turbans richly adorned with pearls. Educated from infancy

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the utmost care, the spectators were astonished to behold in these children all the reserve, the politeness, and attention of maturer years. The kindness with which they were received by the British commander, appeared to afford them the highest satisfaction. Some presents were exchanged on both sides, and the whole transaction exhibited a scene at once peculiarly novel, pleasing, and interesting. On the nineteenth of March, 1792, the definitive treaty, signed by the sultan, was delivered by the young princes, with great solemnity, into the hands of lord Cornwallis; but the sums specified in the second article not being actually paid, the princes remained for some time longer under the safe guard and custody of his lordship.

XXXII. Thus, fortunately for Britain, terminated a war, which, perhaps, had neither solid justice for its foundation, nor sound policy for its object. The benefits we may yet communicate to the natives of India, remain for time to discover; but certain it is, the *past* history of that country but too fully proves, that in those regions the British name has been too often dishonored, and our footsteps too often marked with blood. If an influx of wealth is the sole advantage to be reaped from the extent and security of our eastern dominions, the views of the STATESMAN will be probably answered. If our power is made subservient to the civilization and intellectual improvement of the natives, the PHILOSOPHER will *exult* in our conquests. If a renovation in the moral and religious condition of the people is produced, *even* the CHRISTIAN will *rejoice* in our victories. Let us then hope that a system of Indian politics, founded on justice and equity, will be adopted and pursued, till science has illumined the inhabitants of those delightful climates; till freedom has erected her standard on the ruins of despotism; and till the affection of the people for the British name succeeds the use of arms, and the havoc, ruin, and calamities of war.

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CHAP.

I. Introduction. II. Dr. Price preaches a Sermon on the Love of our Country, the fifth of November 1789, before the Members of the Revolution Society. III. An Address of Congratulation presented to the National Assembly of France from the Revolution Society. IV. Mr. Burke publishes his celebrated Pamphlet in which he censures the Doctrines of Dr. Price. V. Mr. Burke's Book well received by the Tory Faction. VI. Answered by Thomas Paine. VII. Effects produced by the publication of the RIGHTS of MAN. VIII. Proclamation against seditious Writings. IX. Official Complaint against certain Expressions in the Proclamation by the French Ambassador. X. The Confederacy of the Courts of Vienna and Berlin against France. XI. The King of the French solicits the friendly Offices of his Britannic Majesty to preserve the Peace of Europe. XII. Declined by the British Cabinet. XIII. The Emperor's Manifesto against France. XIV. Prussian Manifesto. XV. Duke of Brunswick's Manifesto. XVI. Reflections on these Manifestos. XVII. Their dreadful Effects at Paris. XVIII. The French strongly averse to a War with Great Britain. XIX. The Deposition of the King of the French;—the Ambassador leaves Paris. XX. Commencement of the Campaign;—the combined Armies take Longwy and Verdun. XXI. These Successes inflame the Parisians;—Massacres of September. XXII. Treacherous Conduct of the Prussians to the Emigrants. XXIII. An immense Number of French Priests arrive in England—humanely received. XXIV. National Convention of France formally constituted;—Dr. Priestly and Thomas Paine chosen Members;—the Baggage of the latter illegally examined at Dover. XXV. The combined Army reduced to a deplorable Situation;—the Duke of Brunswick proposes an armistice, and solicits a Conference with Dumouriez. XXVI. The Prussians guilty of Fraud;—suspected of Treachery. XXVII. The combined Army obliged to retreat. XXVIII. Amazing Success of the French Army. XXIX. The congratulatory Address of the English Society to the National Convention. XXX. The Convention

the famous Decree of Fraternization. XXXI. The English Government discover their Alarm at the Extent of the French Conquests;—Assistance offered to Holland;—refused. XXXII. The English Cabinet avow their Approbation of the Principles of the grand Confederacy. XXXIII. The Artifices used by Ministers to inflame the Passions of the People against the French. XXXIV. Proclamations for calling out the Militia,—for assembling Parliament;—the troubled State of the Country at the Conclusion of 1792.

AS we are now approaching that calamitous period, when England was destined to interfere in the affairs of France; and from an honorable and prosperous neutrality, to become the principal in a war which has deluged the continent in blood; this is perhaps, the most proper place to review the causes which eventually involved the nation in a contest, so fatal to its best interests. When the reader is presented by an uninterrupted narrative, with a regular and unbroken chain of events, he has before him in one combined view both causes and effects, and can therefore judge with more precision, and decide with greater certainty. It was with this view, that the writings of Mr. Burke were overlooked in the order of time, and reserved for the period of 1792, when their dreadful effects were universally felt in the violent and uncorous animosities to which they had given birth, and which threw the whole kingdom into one general ferment.

II. In order then, to trace to their source the troubles and dissensions which convulsed this country in the latter months of 1792, it is necessary to revert to the anniversary meeting of the revolution society held in the metropolis on the fifth of November 1789. On that day, a sermon was preached before the members, by the celebrated Dr. Price, on “the love of our country.” In his discourse, the primary principles of government were stated in a mode which the sanction of a century had rendered familiar to Englishmen; and the great doctrines of liberty inculcated with all that emphasis and energy, which characterized the pen of that distinguished and venerable

venerable patriot. "The improvement of the world depended," as the preacher affirmed, "on the attention given by men to this topic. Nor will mankind be ever as virtuous and happy as they are capable of being, till the attention to it becomes universal and efficacious. If we forget it, we shall be in danger of an idolatry as gross and stupid, as that of the ancient heathens, who, after fabricating blocks of wood or stone, fell down and worshipped them." At the conclusion of this discourse, in expatiating on the friendly aspect of the present times to all exertions in the cause of liberty, he broke out into the following eloquent exclamation, "What an eventful period is this! I am thankful that I have lived to it: and I could almost say, Lord! *now lettest thou thy servants depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* I have lived to see a diffusion of knowledge which has undermined superstition and error: I have lived to see the rights of men better understood than ever, and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it. I have lived to see thirty millions of people indignantly and resolutely spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice; their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects. After sharing in the benefits of one revolution, I have been spared to be a witness to two other revolutions, both glorious; and now methinks I see the ardor for liberty catching and spreading, and a general amendment beginning in human affairs—the dominion of kings changed for the dominion of laws, and the dominion of priests, giving way to the dominion of reason and conscience. Be encouraged, all ye friends of freedom, and writers in its defence! The times are auspicious. Your labours have not been in vain. Behold kingdoms admonished by you, starting from sleep, breaking their fetters, and claiming justice from their oppressors! Behold the light you have struck out, after setting America free, reflected to France, and there kindled into a blaze, that lays despotism in ashes, and warms and illuminates Europe!"

III. Impressed

III. Impressed with these noble and generous sentiments, the society whose numbers on this occasion far exceeded those of any former anniversary, unanimously resolved, on the motion of Dr. Price, to offer, in a formal address, "their congratulations to the national assembly, on the event of the late glorious revolution in France." This being transmitted by their chairman, lord Stanhope, to the duke de la Rochefocault, and laid by that distinguished nobleman before the assembly, was received with loud acclamations. "It belonged," said the duke de la Rochefocault in his reply, "to Dr. Price, the apostle of liberty, to propose a motion tending to pay to liberty the fairest homage—that of national prejudices. In that address is seen the dawn of a glorious day, in which two adverse nations shall contract an intimate union, founded on the similarity of their opinions, and their common enthusiasm for liberty." Also the the archbishop of Aix, president of the national assembly, transmitted to lord Stanhope, in a manner the most polite and flattering, the vote of the assembly, relative to the address, stating "that the assembly was deeply affected with this extraordinary proof of esteem, and directing the president to express to the revolution society, the lively sensibility with which the national assembly had received an address, breathing those sentiments of humanity and universal benevolence, that ought to unite together in all countries of the world the true friends of liberty, and the happiness of mankind."

IV. In the month of February following, Mr. Burke uttered his first furious invective against the French revolution in the house of commons, and, transported with rage and rancor at the high degree of prosperity it had now attained, published, a few months after this memorable speech, a book intitled "Reflections on the French Revolution," written with a force of eloquence and energy of declamation calculated to produce the most powerful effects. The object of this elaborate treatise was two-fold:—1. To expose to the public resentment and indignation, those persons who had in this country manifested

nifested their approbation of the revolution in France; and, 2. To place that revolution itself in an odious and execrable light, as an event to be deplored, detested, and deprecated. With the most atrocious and unexampled malignity, he invites and exhorts all christian princes (in the appendix to this work) to make, what he stiles, "a common cause with a just prince, dethroned by rebels and traitors." The deluded people of France, to be rescued from the evils they had brought upon themselves, must, as he affirmed, be **SUBDUED**: and he intimates that this war, or crusade, is to be conducted on principles different from any former one. "The mode of civilized war," says he, "will not be practised; they must look for no modified hostility; all which is not battle will be **MILITARY EXECUTION**." The members of the revolution society, and the other commemorators of the French revolution, he inveighs against in terms of the most unqualified abuse; and he charges Dr. Price, in particular, with having *fulminated*, in his revolution sermon, principles little short of treason and rebellion. "His doctrines," says Mr. Burke, "affect our constitution in its vital parts. He affirms, that his majesty is almost the only lawful king in the world, because the only one who owes his crown to the choice of his people. As to the kings of the world, all of whom *except* one, this arch-pontiff of the rights of men, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldness, of the papal deposing power in its meridian fervor of the twelfth century, puts into one sweeping clause of *ban and anathema*, and proclaims usurpers by circles of longitude and latitude over the whole globe, it behoves them to consider, if they admit into their territories these apostolic missionaries who are to tell their subjects they are not lawful kings. No thing can be more untrue, than that the crown of this realm is held by his majesty by the choice of the people. Whilst the legal conditions of the *compact of sovereignty* are performed, he holds his crown, as Mr. Burke virtually affirmed, in **CONTEMPT** of their choice." According to this novel and extraordinary mode of reasoning, in conformity

his conduct to the conditions of the national choice, he reigns in actual contempt of their choice. Dr. Price having asserted the abstract right of the people, as exemplified at the revolution, to depose their governors for misconduct, and frame a government for themselves; Mr. Burke says, "the people of England utterly disclaim it; they will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes." But how the people can, in any given or possible circumstances, *resist their own act*, is a paradox which this sublime writer attempts not to solve.*

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* Certain it is that Dr. Price advanced in this famous discourse no other principles than those which had ever been held sacred by the Whig party, and which Mr. Locke had urged a hundred years before in defence of the title of king William, and the validity of the revolution government. Amongst innumerable passages to the same purpose, a single citation may well suffice in vindication of a doctrine resting on the immovable foundation of common sense. "Though in a constituted commonwealth," says that immortal writer, "standing upon its own basis, and acting according to its own nature, that is, acting for the preservation of the community, there can be but one supreme power, which is the legislative, to which all the rest are and must be subordinate; yet the legislative being only a *judiciary power*, to act for certain ends, there remains still in the people a supreme power to remove or alter the legislative, when they find the legislative act contrary to the trust reposed in them. For all power given with trust for the obtaining an end, being limited by that end, whenever that end is manifestly neglected or opposed, the trust must be necessarily *forfeited*, and the power devolved into the hands who gave it, who may place it anew where they shall think best for their safety and security. And thus the community perpetually retains a supreme power of saving themselves from the attempts and designs even of their legislators, whenever they shall be so foolish or so wicked as to lay and carry on designs against the liberties and properties of

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V. From the date of the fatal publication of Mr. Burke, who seemed ambitious to signalize himself by setting not merely a kingdom but the world itself on fire, the subject. If they who say this hypothesis lays a foundation for rebellion, mean that it may occasion civil wars or intestine broils, to tell the people that they are absolved from obedience, when illegal attempts are made upon their liberties and properties, they may as well say, upon the same ground, that honest men may not oppose robbers or pirates, because this may occasion disorder or bloodshed, I desire it may be considered what kind of peace there will be in the world, which is to be maintained only for the benefit of robbers and oppressors. Polyphemus's den gives us a perfect pattern of such a peace; such a government, wherein Ulysses and his companions had nothing to do but quietly to suffer themselves to be devoured. Are the people to be blamed if they have the sense of rational creatures, and can think of things no otherwise than as they find and feel them? And is it not rather their fault, who put things in such a posture, that they would not have them thought as they are? But whether the mischief hath oftener begun in the people's wantonness or the ruler's insolence, I leave to impartial history to determine." Similar principles are laid down by lord Bolingbroke, who is well known to have been in his habits of life and practice, both a Tory and a Jacobite. "The legislative," says his lordship, "is a *supreme*, and may be called in one sense an *absolute*, but in none an arbitrary power." If you, therefore, put so extravagant a case as to suppose the two houses of parliament concurring to make at once a formal cession of their own rights and privileges, and of those of the whole nation to the crown, and ask who hath the right and means to *resist* the supreme legislative power; I answer, the whole nation hath the right, and a people, who deserve to enjoy liberty, will find the means. An attempt of this kind would break the *bargain* between the king and the nation, between the *representative* and collective body of the people, and would dissolve the constitution.

the nation was divided into two violent and openly hostile parties. The Tory faction, which had hitherto scarcely dared to whisper their dislike, now under the sanction of Mr. Burke's authority, became bold and clamorous in their vociferations. The principles advanced by Mr. Burke, ever grateful to the ear of princes, at once obliterated all his past offences, and placed him in the foremost rank of favourites and courtiers. It is true, that the approbation of the minister and his intimate adherents, was at first cautiously bestowed on Mr. Burke's novel and daring doctrines; but as the crisis approached when the public mind was better prepared for the declaration of their sentiments, they were more open and unequivocal in this encouragement of the anti-gallican orator.

VI. This extraordinary production gave rise to numberless replies, of which by far the most memorable was that written by Thomas Paine, the author of the famous pamphlet styled COMMON SENSE, which by its almost magical effect on the minds of the people of America, at a most important crisis, paved the way for the declaration of independency. His present work, RIGHTS OF MAN, was written with no less power of intellect and force of language; and made a correspondent, perhaps an indelible, impression upon the public mind. Not content with pointing out and exposing with the most sarcastic severity the absurdities, paradoxes, and misrepresentations of Mr. Burke—not content with painting in just and striking colours the abuses and corruptions of the existing government; he with daring and unhallowed hand attacked the principles of the constitution itself—describing it in terms the most indecent, as radically vicious and tyrannical; and reprobating the introduction of aristocracy or monarchy, under whatever modifications, into any form of government, as a flagrant usurpation and invasion of the unalienable rights of man.

"When we survey," says this temerarious writer, "the wretched condition of man under the monarchical

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and hereditary systems of government, dragged from his home by one power, or driven by another, and impoverished by taxes more than by enemies; it becomes evident that those systems are bad, and that a GENERAL REVOLUTION in the principle and construction of governments is necessary." The success of Mr. Paine's first part of the Rights of Man encouraged him shortly after to produce a second part *combining principle and practice*, in which the vices, defects, and imperfections of the British government are examined with a still more critical severity, and the constitution attacked and ridiculed with redoubled virulence.

VII. These works unfortunately appearing at a time when a large proportion of the community, and those too the most zealously attached to liberty, were from causes already specified, in a state of great irritation and discontent; and the books, notwithstanding their absurd and mischievous political positions, being written in a style and manner which "came home to men's business and bosoms," innumerable converts were made to their general system; and such were the pains taken to circulate them amongst the body of the people, that no less than the amazing number of fifty thousand copies were in a short time said to be sold. Political associations were also instituted in every part of the kingdom, professing to have in view the reform of the constitution, but many of which were, not without reason, suspected of carrying their views much farther. Such were the lamentable consequences resulting from the rashness and folly of Mr. Burke, whose boasted *panacea* operated upon the body politic as a most deadly poison; and which served to prove that learning and eloquence may subsist in the highest perfection, without being accompanied with a single particle of wisdom.

VIII. Though the immense circulation of Mr. Paine's books was a matter of public notoriety, yet, such was the shameful inattention of government, that for upwards of a year not a single process had been instituted against publisher, printer, or seller of these alarming and libellous

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libellous doctrines. At length however, when they had operated their full mischief, and the fervor of the first profelytism had abated, the attorney general filed an information against Thomas Paine in the Easter term of 1792; and on the 21st. of May following, a royal proclamation was issued against the publication and sale of seditious writings, with strong injunctions to all persons to inform against those who should be guilty of such daring attempts, &c. This proclamation, which was evidently pointed at the RIGHTS OF MAN, was with considerable propriety termed "*An Advertisement by Authority*," and surely no expedient could be better calculated to procure consequence to the author, or popularity to his works.

IX. The proclamation having intimated a belief, that "correspondencies had been entered into with sundry persons in foreign parts," obviously alluding to France, M. Chauvelin who had but a few weeks before arrived here in the capacity of French ambassador, presented immediately an official declaration to lord Grenville, in which he complained that certain expressions in the proclamation appeared to give credit to the erroneous opinions propagated by the enemies of France, both as to the hostile intentions of Great Britain towards France, and the treacherous designs of France to promote sedition and confusion in the kingdom of Great Britain: it was expressive of the most pacific and honorable dispositions of France towards this country, and produced an answer from lord Grenville, that breathed the strongest sentiments of peace and amity, with an unequivocal engagement from our king, *directly and positively* to maintain the treaty of navigation and commerce existing between the two nations. As it was generally suspected in France, that the king of Great Britain had entered into the league of Pilnitz, and was in secret alliance with the courts of Vienna and Berlin, the answer of lord Grenville, when read in the national assembly, was received with boundless applause, as a seasonable pledge of peace, at a time, when

when strong fears were entertained of the hostile intentions of our court.*

* Dark and mysterious as the conduct of the allied courts has been relative to the treaty of Pilnitz, the following paper, which has never been officially disowned, and which cannot be read without indignation by any friend of liberty and justice, will leave no doubt of the baseness and criminality of their designs.

Partition treaty between the courts in concert, concluded and signed at Pavia, in the month of July 1791.

" His majesty the emperor will retake all that Louis 14th, conquered in the Austrian Netherlands; and uniting these provinces to the said Netherlands, will give them to his serene highness the elector palatine, so that these new possessions, added to the palatinate, may hereafter have the name of Austrasia.

" His majesty the emperor will preserve, for ever, the property and possession of Bavaria, to make in future an indivisible mass with the domains and hereditary possessions of the house of Austria.

" Her serene highness the archduchess Maria Christina shall be, conjointly with his serene highness her nephew, the archduke Charles, put into hereditary possession of the duchy of Lorraine.

" Alsace shall be restored to the empire, and the bishop of Strasburgh, as well as the chapter shall recover their ancient privileges, and the ecclesiastical sovereigns of Germany shall do the same.

" If the Swiss cantons consent and accede to the coalition, it may be proposed to them to annex to the helvetic league the bishopric of Porentrice, the desfilés of Franche Comte, and even those of Tyrol, with the neighbouring bailiwicks, as well as the territory of Berfoy, which intersects the pays de Vaud.

" Should his majesty the king of Sardinia subscribe to the coalition, la Bresse, le Bugey, and the pays de Gex, usurped by France from Savoy, shall be restored to him.

" In case his Sardinian majesty can make a grand diversion, he shall be suffered to take Dauphiny to belong to him for ever, as the nearest descendant of the ancient Dauphins.

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X. The political situation of France at this time draws our attention to a vast variety of circumstances,

"His majesty the king of Spain shall have Roussillon and Bearn, with the island of Corsica, and he shall take possession of the French part of Saint Domingo.

"Her majesty the empress of all the Russias shall take upon herself the invasion of Poland, and at the same time retain Kamienieck, with that part of Padolia which borders on Moldavia.

"His majesty the emperor shall oblige the Porte to give up Choczim, as well as the small forts of Servia, and those on the river Lurna.

"His majesty the king of Prussia, by means of the above mentioned invasion of the empress of all the Russias into Poland, shall make an acquisition of Thorn and Dantzic, and there unite the palatine on the east to the confines of Silesia.

"His majesty the king of Prussia shall besides acquire Lusace, and his serene highness the elector of Saxony shall in exchange receive the rest of Poland, and occupy the throne as hereditary sovereign.

"His majesty the present king of Poland shall abdicate the throne, on receiving a suitable annuity.

"His royal highness the elector of Saxony shall give his daughter in marriage to his serene highness, the youngest son of his royal highness the grand duke of all the Russias, who will be the father of the race of the hereditary kings of Poland and Lithuania

(Signed)

"LEOPOLD,

"PRINCE NASSAU,

"COUNT FLORIDA BLANCA,

"BISCHOFFSUEERDER."

The king of England is said to have acceded to this treaty in march 1792. And Holland to have acceded afterwards, provided the arrangements, respecting their limits with his imperial majesty should be made according to the desire of the republic before the partition.

Spain renounced it when count d' Aranda came into office as minister, giving assurances however of the strictest neutrality.

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that in their consequences deeply involve the interest of our own and every other kingdom of Europe. She was hitherto only engaged in war against the emperor. But the principles which have since produced the formidable armed confederacy against her, were from henceforth working a silent, though violent effect. The French foresaw the gathering storm, and by vigorous measures prepared to resist it. The legislative body declared France to be in danger, and passed a set form of decrees for arming the kingdom. The king addressed a letter to the national assembly, exhorting them to internal peace and harmony, as the sure means of repelling the hostile attacks of any foreign enemies. He sent a formal notification to all the powers of Europe, by which he disavowed and protested against all the acts which the French princes had done in his name, with regard to making loans of money, entering into negotiations with foreign courts, and levying troops. He professed his attachment to the constitution, which he declared he had freely accepted and sworn to defend. He assured them of his determination to make use of all the force put into his hands against the enemies of France, whatever pretext might be employed to countenance the armed assemblies of emigrants, or to support them in their hostile proceedings. The minister immediately after announced to the assembly the confederacy of Vienna and Berlin against their country, and that France would soon be attacked by an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men.

XI. France had on every occasion, since the commencement of her revolution up to this period, expressed a constant and anxious solicitude to preserve a good understanding with this country. Nor were there any terms so humiliating or harsh, to which she did not appear over ready to submit, in order to secure this important and primary object. Nothing can be more emphatically expressive of these sentiments, than the note which M. de Chauvelin presented upon this subject to lord Grenville in which, for the preservation of the peace of Europe, the
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king of the French urges his Britannic majesty zealously to employ his good offices with his allies, to prevent them from granting to the enemies of France, directly or indirectly, any assistance. He complains of the measures taken by the court of Vienna to engage the Prussians in a quarrel foreign from their interests, and intimates that similar attempts were successfully made upon the republic of Holland. He adverts also, with much apparent concern, to the menaces employed to draw the different members of the Germanic body from that prudent neutrality, which their political situation, and every object dear to them prescribe. He complains of the engagements entered into with the sovereigns of Italy, to determine them to commence hostilities against France. He laments the intrigues which have armed Russia against the constitution of Poland, and which openly announced a daring conspiracy against every free state, that threatens to involve Europe in all the horrors of a general war. He invites him to employ in his wisdom, and in the plenitude of his influence, the means compatible with the independence of the French nation, to stop, whilst yet it may be effected, the progress of this dreadful combination, equally dangerous to the peace, the liberty, and the happiness of Europe.

XII. The evasive answer of lord Grenville to this official note, sufficiently bespoke the approbation with which the English government viewed the measures of its allies against France. The answer states, "That the same sentiments which engaged his Britannic majesty not to interfere with the internal affairs of France, equally tended to induce him to respect the rights and independence of other sovereigns, and particularly those of his allies." The slightest observer will perceive an obvious and important difference between the interference with the internal affairs of an independent state, and the intermediation of a third power to conciliate a quarrel, or prevent a rupture between contending sovereigns. The former encroaches upon the rights and independence of other powers,—the latter admits and recognizes both.

When the conduct of ministers is recollected, in their recent interference between the Ottoman Porte and the empress respecting the cession of Oczakow, (an object which could scarcely affect the interests of this country in the most distant degree,) it will not only appear that they are not always restrained from obtruding their services by a scrupulous delicacy, but that the studied evasion observable in this answer to the French court was most probably only intended to conceal, till the proper opportunity, the hostile disposition of our government to the new order of things in France. If any doubt should remain of the truth of this observation, it will be completely removed by the subsequent conduct of the British court.

XIII. The late emperor Leopold finished his short reign by a sudden death on the first of March 1792. This event happened at a most critical moment, strong suspicions were entertained of French poison, which were soon removed by the publication of an authentic narrative of his case. He was succeeded by his son Francis I. who was proclaimed emperor at Frankfort on the fifth of July. The first act of his reign was to declare his cordial accession to the treaty of Pilnitz; and from henceforth the courts of Vienna and Berlin joined in public hostilities against France. The court of Vienna published a declaration or manifesto of the reasons which induced her to take up arms against France. The first of these regarded the nature of the protection afforded to the emigrants, which, through misrepresentation, had given much umbrage to France. The next touched on the spirit of anarchy and violence now reigning in France, of which it had become necessary for a concert of princes to check the progress, in order to oppose its introduction into their own states. That it depended on those who reign at present over France to make this concert cease immediately, by respecting the tranquillity and rights of other powers, and to *guarantee the essential basis of the French monarchical form of government against the infringements of violence and anarchy.* That France

had sent an army of one hundred and thirty thousand men to the borders of the Austrian Netherlands, whilst Austria had not even ten thousand men to defend them. In a word, that whilst France was loudly complaining of other powers for interfering in the consequences of their new constitution, they were endeavouring to subvert all governments, by spreading over Europe seduction and insurrection.

XIV. The king of Prussia published a similar declaration. His manifesto, however, was more diffuse than that of Austria, and entered more particularly into the suppression and invasion of the rights and possessions of the German princes of Alsace and Lorrain, and the violation of the treaties that united France to the German empire. It enlarged on the mischievous consequences of propagating anti-monarchical principles, and it described the conduct of the French government with regard to the troops sent to the frontiers, as an unprovoked attack of his ally the king of Hungary and Bohemia, and consequently an unequivocal declaration of war by France. These manifestoes of the allied powers produced a violent fermentation at Paris. The country was publicly declared to be in danger, and the most vigorous measures were immediately adopted to recruit the army and strengthen the frontiers. A royal proclamation was published, setting forth in a strong light the dangers to which France was exposed. In consequence of this and other steps taken by the French government, a profusion of volunteers of all ages immediately poured down upon the frontiers with the ardor of the most frantic enthusiasm.

XV. Coblenz was at this time the general rendezvous of the French emigrants. Here they had assembled to the number of near twenty thousand; and the king of Prussia, on his arrival, was received as the illustrious chief, under whose auspices they expected the complete restoration of the ancient order of things. The reigning duke of Brunswick had the command of the combined armies which were destined for the great enterprise

of invading France. But before he began his march from Coblenz, in order that the whole world might fully know the views and spirit of his glorious mission, he published a manifesto in his own name, in which, to a general recapitulation of the reasons assigned by the emperor and the king of Prussia, for combining their forces against France, he subjoins; "To these high interests, is added another important object, and which both sovereigns have most cordially in view, which is to put an end to that anarchy which prevails in the interior parts of France; to put a stop to the attacks made on the throne and the altar, and restore to the King his legitimate power," &c. Then, as commander in chief of the two armies, he disavows any pretence to enrich themselves by conquest; and disclaims *any intention to meddle with the internal government of France*. But in case of their making any resistance when summoned to surrender, or when attacked; or of their not preventing conflagrations, murders, and pillage; or of their removing the king and royal family from Paris; or of their attempting to force or insult the palace of the Thuilleries; or of their offering the least violence or outrage to their majesties or the royal family: then does he fulminate his maledictions upon the devoted land; he denounces instant death to the rebels taken in arms; decapitation and confiscation to the members of the departments, districts, and municipalities; military execution to the members of the national assembly, magistrates, and all the inhabitants of Paris; and total destruction to their guilty city. Though this thundering menace seemed to threaten vengeance awefully compendious, yet the duke of Brunswick was still reproached with some afflicting qualms of lenity; and, in less than forty eight hours, he sent forth a second manifesto, to confirm and heighten the terror of the first, declaring, "that if, contrary to all expectation, by the perfidy or baseness of some inhabitants of Paris, the king, the queen, or any other person of the royal family should be carried off from the city, all the places and towns whatsoever which shall not have

have opposed their passage, and shall not have stopped their proceedings, shall incur the same punishments as those inflicted on the inhabitants of Paris, and their route shall be marked with a series of exemplary punishments justly due to the authors and abettors of crimes for which there is no remission."

XVI. However carefully the different parties to the convention of Pilnitz conceal their secret stipulations from the eyes of curiosity and of interest; yet, the faithful historian will not lose sight of the principles upon which they profess to have entered into the confederacy, and upon which they have succeeded in engaging this country, as well as most other powers of Europe in the fatal alliance. All parties disavow the right, and disclaim the intention of interfering with the internal government of France; and in the same breath they insist upon the abolition of that change in their internal government which the nation had called for, and which the king himself had accepted and confirmed by oath. They dictate the mode and place in which these alterations are to be brought about, or new arrangements formed in the internal government of the kingdom. They threaten to enforce the execution of their interfering mandates, not by the slow and inefficient process of criminal law, but by the bold energy of military justice — by the summary and indiscriminate destruction of whole bodies, municipalities, towns, cities, departments, and provinces. No disavowal of these principles has as yet been attempted by the confederate powers. Their inability indeed to reduce them to practice has been sufficiently manifested; and if the cruelty and despotism of their attempts excite our hatred, the imbecility and mismanagement which has attended all their schemes of vengeance, must impart the highest pleasure to the liberal, humane, and generous mind.

XVII. No sooner was the manifesto of the duke of Brunswick received in Paris, than immediately the king wrote a letter to the national assembly, expressive of his surprise and indignation at such a performance; of his
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general love of peace, his sincere attachment to the constitution, and his determined resolution to oppose the hostile efforts of the combined powers. The mischievous effects of this manifesto upon France are beyond measure or calculation. The king's letter was read in the assembly, and a motion for sending it to the eighty-three departments was rejected. It was urged by Isnard and Thuriot to be a mass of falsehood and insincerity, and that, in the present moment of alarm and danger, his known duplicity ought not to be trusted. At this moment were admitted to the bar of the assembly the envoys from the commonalty of Paris, with PETION at their head, who demanded, in the name of the forty-eight sections, that the king should be excluded from the throne, and that the management of affairs during the interregnum should be entrusted to responsible ministers, until a new king should be elected by a national convention. He recapitulated every circumstance, from the commencement of the revolution, that could render the king odious and suspected by the nation: that he too had taken a part against them in the convention of Pilnitz, and was indefatigable in his attempts to bring about a counter-revolution. His speech, which was in writing, was delivered in to the president; but the assembly came to no resolution upon it. In the evening of the same day, the king sent to acquaint the assembly, that the elector of Cologne and the duke of Wirtemburgh had joined the armed confederacy.

XVIII. On the ensuing day (August 4th, 1792,) the marine committee demanded that thirty-three sail of the line should be put into commission, in consequence of the reports of a British armament. But the assembly rejected the application, thinking it unwise to provoke Great Britain to hostilities, after she had so recently renewed her assurances of neutrality to their ambassador. A fleet at sea, and a camp in time of peace, are not very usual sights in England: however the cabinet of Saint James still spoke peace; and the ruling power in France gave willing credit to what it earnestly wished. The Jacobins had

now acquired a decided ascendancy over the mob, and they were resolved to profit of the existing circumstances to crush all the constituted authorities. This may with propriety be called the opening scene of that fatal tragedy of blood and horror, the final catastrophe of which we still look up to with shuddering dread. Whatever may have been the principles or the plans of the princes settled at Pilnitz, we may now see their effects in the open and concerted measures of the leading parties of that convention. The unfortunate Louis had been unaccountably and basely abandoned by the bulk of the French nobility, who had embodied and embarked openly with the combined powers against France. Whatever remained of respectability in the nation, if they did not, like the emigrant nobility, wish for the complete restitution of the ancient despotism, yet, they were desirous to give permanency to a constitution, which should ensure them a limited and hereditary monarchy in the person of their sovereign. These latter were more formidable to the Jacobins than the former. Both the emigrants and constitutionalists, though they cordially despised and execrated each other, yet agreed in the common wish to preserve the dignity and safety of the sovereign, whom the Jacobins were determined at all events to ruin. The fatal folly of the combined powers, who in their proclamations had asserted, that *the king was not sincere in his acceptance of the constitution*, supplied them with a pretext sufficient for their purpose. It sufficed for the Jacobins, to hold him out to the nation as combining with foreign powers to reduce France by force of arms, either to a strange yoke, or to a worse than their ancient slavery. Whatever party in France might have still wished for the re-establishment of the ancient unqualified power of the crown, could not avow themselves abettors of the cause of enemies, who were marching into the kingdom in open war. All those who had sworn to support the constitution, were by their oath committed to defend it, against those who were by force attempting to destroy it. Thus, by this ill judged and fatal declaration, the real cause

cause of royalty in France was irretrievably deprived of the possibility of any open or efficient support.

XIX. The grand and fatal question of deposition or forfeiture stood for the ninth of August : but the extreme agitation of the public mind would not permit the subject to be fairly discussed in the assembly. A detail of the awful and terrific scenes of the tenth is foreign from the design of English history, and therefore, it is only necessary to state, that in consequence of the dread transactions of that memorable day, and the virtual deposition of the French monarch, lord Gower, the English ambassador at Paris, received orders from the court of London to quit the kingdom immediately, on the slight and frivolous pretext, that the functions of royalty being suspended, his mission was at an end. This recal was considered by the leading men in France as an ominous and certain indication of the enmity of the British court : nevertheless, as a demonstration of their moderation, and solicitude for peace, M. Chauvelin the French ambassador still remained in London, though from this period unacknowledged in any public or authorised capacity. The recal of the English ambassador at this critical moment, on the ground stated by the English court, seemed to imply that appointments of this nature are a mere matter of form and compliment between sovereigns : but if ambassadors are considered in a higher and juster light, as the necessary means of intercourse between nation and nation, never could the recal of an ambassador take place at a period when his presence and services were more indispensable. The declaration of the emigrant princes, which appeared at this time, was an inflated phillipic and ostentatious menace, little calculated to sooth the irritation of their incensed countrymen. In order to gain credit, and secure their confidence, they assure them, that they had left the kingdom, not so much from a desire for their own personal safety as that of the king. *The emigration from our country was to make ourselves the safeguard of his majesty.* They recapitulate and confirm the manifesto of the emperor and the king of Prussia, and

that of their hero the great duke of Brunswick. They introduce upon the scene new parties to the confederacy, that hitherto were not publicly known to have acceded to it; "the kings of the house of Bourbon our august cousins: our much honoured father-in-law, the Nestor of sovereigns: the heroine of the north, our sublime protectress: and the young heir of the unfortunate Gustavus." They re-echo the protestations of all these confederated sovereigns, against interfering with the internal government of the kingdom; and yet, at the same time, they have the effrontery to declare, that, *their only object is to restore the ancient monarchy, the ancient laws, manners, &c.*"

XX. The plans of the campaign having been settled, the Prussian troops began their march from Triers on the eleventh of August, and by the end of the month Longwy, a small, but well fortified town, had surrendered to general Clairfait.—Verdun also surrendered to the duke of Brunswick without resistance. The governor of Longwy was accused of having delivered up the town through treachery. The governor of Verdun was compelled to do it by the inhabitants: but he would not survive the disgrace, and shot himself with a pistol. In order to tranquillize the public mind, agitated in the highest degree by these misfortunes, M. le Brun the French minister for foreign affairs, laid before the assembly a statement of the situation of the country, with respect to foreign powers. He stated that Sweden was unequivocal in declaring its neutrality: that Russia had been able to do no more than threaten, though she did not attempt to disguise her hostile intention: that Spain, Naples and Sardinia were in the like situation: that the generality of the German body shewed a firm reluctance to take arms against France: and that Holland and England never ceased to promise the most perfect neutrality. Such were the avowed views and open professions of these different powers. it was however remarked, that about this time the Landgrave of Hesse acceded to the confederacy, and headed a body of seven thousand Hessians,

fans, with a large train of artillery. It was not credited that the Landgrave, *even* on this occasion, went out of his accustomed line of mercenary service: but it was with strong reason generally believed, that this body of troops was paid for by some of the powers of Europe, whose adverse wishes and hostile intentions towards France were kept concealed behind their hollow professions of neutrality.

XXI. The surrender of Verdun to the duke of Brunswick completed the delirium of rage to which his thundering manifesto had given rise. Paris became a scene of alarm and agitation, and the ruling demagogues seized the moment of terror, to hurl destruction upon their domestic enemies, and gratify their purposes of vengeance. Mr. Burke's fatal prediction was recalled to their minds, "that if ever a foreign prince enters into France, he must enter it, as into a country of assassins. The mode of civilized war will not be practised; nor are the French who act on the present system entitled to expect it." The duke of Brunswick was represented as having passed Chalons; and the community of Paris decreed the gates to be shut; summoned all the citizens to arms; then, under pretence of searching for warlike implements and ammunition,

* It has been said, "that this man was born to illuminate, but has existed only to confound," and the whole tenor of his public conduct justifies the severity of the remark. His tergiversations in political principles, are perhaps the most shameless upon record. As one instance, amongst innumerable others, let the shocking declaration be contrasted with one he formerly delivered on the subject of the American war. "The Americans," says he, "had taken up arms from one motive only, that is, our attempting to tax them without their consent; and he certainly never could and never did wish the colonists to be subdued by arms," as if it were more criminal in an Englishman to sympathize with a foreign nation struggling to emancipate itself from the oppressions of despotism than to justify the rebellion of his fellow subjects against

ammunition, commenced a round of domiciliary visits, dragged numbers of suspected persons from their beds to prison at midnight; and, horrid to relate, in the course of the three following days, some thousands were murdered in cold blood, without accusation or defence.

XXII. It is not the design of this history to follow minutely the motions of the combined armies, to which as yet Great Britain had not openly acceded. But, it is a duty incumbent on the English historian, to endeavour to trace in the actions of the united sovereigns, those principles of their confederacy, to which England afterwards assented when she became a party in the grand alliance. Dumourier, who commanded the French army with very inferior force, succeeded in stopping the progress of the enemy, and defeating every view that had brought the combined armies into the field. The small town of Thionville was for several weeks besieged in vain, by the prince Hohenloe and the chief body of French emigrants. It was at this siege, that these unfortunate men first found reason to lament the cause in which they had embarked. Anxious to acquire a military reputation, and to animate others by their example, they offered to reduce the town by themselves, if the commander in chief would supply them with proper ordnance for the siege. This was refused, and during the whole of the campaign they were constantly kept in the back ground, in a state of inactivity, the most mortifying and inglorious. They received no pay during their service, were disbanded at pleasure, were pillaged by the Prussian soldiery, though against their lawful sovereign. Nothing has as yet been offered sufficient to account for this astonishing change of opinion, and the only reason given for his rancorous hatred of the French is, that some of the wits of the constituent assembly indulged in a few sarcastic remarks on the style of his sublime oratory. Perhaps, a *passion* "might be soothing to his moral sentiments." But, after all, he has sunk into infamy, despised and detested:---may his fate deter Englishmen from copying his example.

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a part of the king of Prussia's army, and were most inhumanely excluded from the cartel for the exchange of prisoners. Having no mercy to expect from their countrymen, they had the stronger claim on the protection of that sovereign under whose banner they were fighting; those, however, who had been surprised by the enemy, were actually executed like common malefactors. This treatment of the French emigrants, is a tolerable proof that the mysterious convention of Pilnitz had for its objects other interests than those of the French.

XXIII. The execution of the decree for banishing all the nonjuring clergymen to Guiana, who should not have quitted the kingdom in fourteen days from its passing, poured thousands of these unfortunate exiles from Normandy, Picardy, and Brittany upon our coasts of Kent and Sussex. Misery and distress are at all times a sufficient passport to English humanity; and this amiable characteristic of our countrymen was on this occasion most eminently displayed. Wherever these sufferers appeared, they were welcomed, relieved and comforted. The old rivalry of the two nations was forgotten, and our difference from that very religion for which they were persecuted, was swallowed up in a generous feeling for their unfortunate and hapless condition. Never was an opportunity of exercising heroic charity more eagerly embraced, nor benevolence conferred with more glowing sensibility.

XXIV. On the twenty first of September, 1792, the national convention was formally declared to be constituted, and the second national assembly was of course dissolved. "Thus ended," says Brissot, "after a year's existence, that stormy legislature under which the public spirit made such a rapid progress, and the French nation marched with giant strides towards a republic." From this period commenced what the French term the reign of liberty and equality; but what their enemies, in derision, call that of anarchy and tyranny. It has been the boast of the French, to have collected from every region into the national convention, whatever talent and spirit could be found

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found to enlighten the intellects, establish the freedom, and ensure the happiness of mankind. From this country, they selected Dr. Priestly and Mr. Thomas Paine: the former declined, the latter accepted the nomination. If Mr. Paine had been thought guilty of seditious or treasonable practices against the state; and if government had been desirous of checking the progress of those evils, of which they so loudly complained in their late proclamation; they might certainly with ease have prevented the avowed fomenters of the mischief from quitting the kingdom. His election for the department of Calais, was so well known in England, that the custom-house officers had received early information of his departure for France, and examined his baggage, with that of Mr. Frost, for prohibited articles, immediately on their arrival at Dover. This ceremony was performed by the collectors in a manner totally unknown before in this country. They examined all their papers, sealed and unsealed; and upon their urging the illegality of custom-house officers seizing private papers, which were not things under their cognizance—they replied, that they were authorized to do it by the late proclamation. Thus was the pitiful and impotent resentment of government shewn against Thomas Paine in the illegal acts of their officers, when the laws fully enabled them to punish the guilt of sedition, or treason (if it existed) in the most striking and exemplary manner.*

XXV. Whatever were the reasons which induced the

* A certain person who had been repeatedly fined for acts of smuggling, being asked, why he obstinately persevered in a course of life, so dangerous and dishonorable, and which must in time inevitably ruin him? Very calmly replied, "I feel such an exquisite pleasure in smuggling, that I would rather make a fortune in that line of business, than a crown by fair trade." The conduct of government officers at Dover, is one proof amongst many, that the present minister, as a statesman, has much the same opinion of constitutional proceedings, that this smuggler has of fair trade.

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duke of Brunswick to decline giving battle to the enemy, no ingenuity can justify his leading an army of seventy thousand men into a barren part of the enemy's kingdom, without securing to them a proper supply of provisions, and a ready and safe retreat. Two months had not expired since this thundering hero had, by his manifestoes, announced death and destruction to all that should not submit to his summons. But now, alas! his army had advanced but a few leagues into the enemy's territory, where one third of its number were destined to find a grave: it had drawn upon itself their contempt by inactivity and insolence; and their detestation by rapacity and plunder. It had been four days without bread, the want of which drove the perishing soldiers to the unwholesome food of unripe grapes; and the wetness of the season superadded to other causes, produced in the combined army a general sickness, that is said to have proved fatal to every third man. Feeling the distress of his situation, the duke of Brunswick proposed an armistice three days after the meeting of the convention, and even condescended to request a conference with the French general Dumourier. The purport of this convention, like that of Pilnitz, has never been satisfactorily explained; surmise and conjecture have supplied the place of fact and information; but the subsequent movements of the armies furnish a clue, that leads with tolerable certainty to the result of this secret conference.

XXVI. From the unexpected and unaccountable conduct of the combined armies in the inglorious close of the campaign, from which so much was expected; reports of treachery in the king of Prussia, and of bribery in the duke of Brunswick, were freely circulated and currently believed. It has even been asserted, upon grounds apparently authentic, that the facts had been traced up to the corruption of their ministers and mistresses; and certain it is, they were openly reproached with the charge both by the emigrants and the Austrians. If, in support of this weighty accusation, the vouchers should be deemed defective, it cannot however be denied, that

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notorious advantages over the enemy were lost or neglected, and that a most ignominious and destructive retreat concluded the campaign. It was commenced by presumptuous declamations and vindictive menaces, and it was supported by a species of fraud which had never before disgraced a civilized nation. They promised solemnly to abstain from pillage, and yet swindled the unresisting inhabitants out of provisions for their armies.— One of these swindling and insulting instruments of fraud was sent by Dumourier to the national convention, as a specimen of the good faith and flattering pledge of those blessings, which the success of the confederated princes would heap upon France. “The village of Hans, in Champagne, has delivered for the Prussian army one hundred and seventeen sheep, the value of which his majesty the king of France engages to pay when his sacred person shall be at liberty, and order re-established in his states. In faith of which I give the special guarantee of his majesty the king of Prussia, which may be exchanged for the value of the said in a proper time and place.”— Signed, the duke of Brunswick-Lunenbourg, September twenty-nine. His highness of Brunswick seems not only to have copied Mr. Burke’s style in the composition of his manifestoes, but, in his conduct as general, to have adopted his principles; and hence, “the mode of civilized war was not practised, nor were the French, who acted on the present system, entitled to expect it.”

XXVII. The commander in chief of the combined armies, when unable longer to maintain his ground, betrayed greater weakness in negotiating with the French general, than he had in losing every advantage he brought into the field. Instead of profiting by experience, in perceiving the extreme impolicy of his two former manifestoes, he was frantic enough to rest the basis of his negotiation upon a third, in which he repeats his thundering and terrific threatenings, with as much assurance as if he had power to inflict them. He predicts the immediate and total ruin of France, from the insatiation of those who assume to themselves the title of deputies cho-

sen by the nation. He assures the French, that the allied sovereigns never will depart from the firm resolution of restoring to his most christian majesty, liberty, safety, and royal dignity; or of exercising just and exemplary vengeance against those who shall longer dare to infringe them. That invariably attached to the principle of not intermeddling with the interior government of France, they still persist in requiring that his most christian majesty, as well as the whole royal family, shall be immediately set at liberty, &c. It is scarcely possible to conceive a greater instance of human weakness, than the publication of this piece of folly, impotency, and inconsistency, in the face of famine, sickness, and despair. General Manstein was, however, on the part of Prussia, still carrying on the negociation with Dumourier: and it appears from their correspondence, which is authentic, that personal conferences had taken place between the duke of Brunswick and the French generals. Dumourier persisted in the impossibility of negotiating upon the basis of a manifesto carrying with it menace and war, that could only tend to irritate a free people, and consequently terminate all amicable intercourse. "It does not," says he, "at all enter the sense of that, which has been talked of between us for the last four days—it even destroys it completely: it is even contradictory to the conversation, with which the duke of Brunswick honoured adjutant-general Thouvenot." The purport of these conferences, to which Dumourier alludes, was the most abject and unequivocal undertaking of the duke of Brunswick, on behalf of the combined powers, to be satisfied with a grant of the smallest portion even of nominal power to the unfortunate Louis; "less," said he, "than that of a king of England, a king of Mahratta, a Stadtholder, a principal tax-gatherer, in short any allowance that could afford them a pretext for retiring." If this mendicant supplication be compared with the language even of the last manifesto, which it had only preceded three days, their insincerity to the French king will be as completely established, as their treachery to

the emigrants. That constitution of France, against which the convention of Pilnitz had been entered into, and for the destruction of which above one hundred thousand men were then in arms, was a larger boon than these humbled menacers now demanded, and was refused. Indeed, it is generally believed that the Prussian army must have been entirely cut off, had not the French generals, either from collusion or humanity, spared them in their retreat. Serious accusations upon this head were carried to the convention, particularly against general Arthur Dillon. But as Dumourier undertook to justify him, it appears to have been agreed upon in the negotiation between the generals, that no molestation should be offered to the retiring army. Verdun and Longwy were given up: the siege of Lisle was raised; and the French declared their country out of danger.

XXVIII. On the eighteenth of October the Austrian and Prussian armies had completely evacuated France.—By this time the French arms were triumphant in every quarter. War having been declared against the king of Sardinia, general Montesquiou entered Savoy on the twentieth of September, was received with joyful acclamation at Chamberi the capital, and the whole country submitted almost without resistance. On the other side, the fortress of Montalban, and the entire county of Nice were conquered by general Anselm. On the banks of the Rhine, general Custine distinguished himself by the most brilliant successes—reducing successively the cities of Worms, Spire, Mentz, and Frankfort. Early in November, general Dumourier entered the Austrian Netherlands. Mons instantly surrendered. Tournay, Ostend, Ghent, and Antwerp soon followed; and on the fourteenth, the French general made his triumphal entry into Brussels. Such were the astonishing effects of that glorious enthusiasm, which can only be inspired by the love of freedom. The rapid and brilliant success of the republican arms in the very outset of their career, filled Europe with consternation and terror. The confederated princes, however, whose sanguinary menaces

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and disgraceful discomfiture, had crowned the triumphs of France; instead of correcting their principles, or abandoning their object, were busily engaged in forming new alliances, and, as will soon appear, were but too successful in drawing their alarmed neighbours into this fatal and destructive crusade. The knowledge of these circumstances did not intimidate the French, nor arrest the progress of their conquests. In proportion as their enemies multiplied, their courage and resources increased, and before the end of November the dominion of the republic was rapidly extended from the Alps to the Rhine, from Geneva to the mouth of the Scheld. The victory of Jemappe secured the conquest of Brabant and Flanders; and the most numerous and best appointed armies of the universe, were every where seen flying from the undisciplined, naked, but enthusiastic troops of the victorious republic.

XXIX. If the French were opposed by numerous and powerful enemies, they had the consolation to know that the friends of liberty in every quarter of the world rejoiced in the success of their revolution. Englishmen in particular, ever alive to the blessings of freedom themselves, took a distinguished and sympathetic part in the struggles of France. There had long existed in Paris a society of British subjects, who, upon receiving the news of the conquest of Brabant, celebrated the joyful event in a general and magnificent festival, and afterwards addressed the convention upon the subject. Some other addresses from our countrymen were presented to the convention in congratulation of their successes. One from the constitutional society of London, was presented by their deputies, Joel Barlow and John Frost, who at the same time intreated their acceptance of one thousand pairs of shoes, as a patriotic offering to the brave soldiers of liberty. As the high flown terms of applause and admiration contained in this last address, will be repeatedly referred to in the sequel, the insertion of it in this place will assist the reader in forming a just opinion of a subsequent and important transaction. "Whilst foreign
plunderers

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plunderers ravage your territories," say these English addressers, "an *oppressed part of mankind*, forgetting their own evils, are sensible only of yours, and address their fervent prayers to the God of the universe, that he may be favorable to your cause, with which *theirs is so intimately connected*. Degraded by an oppressive system of inquisition, the insensible but continual encroachments of which, quickly deprived this nation of its liberty, and reduced it almost to that abject state of slavery from which you have so gloriously emancipated yourselves. FIVE THOUSAND English citizens, fired with indignation, have the courage to step forward to rescue their country from that opprobrium, which has been thrown on it by the base conduct of those who are invested with power. We see with concern that the elector of Hanover unites his troops to those of TRAITORS and ROBBERS: but the king of England will do well to remember that England is not Hanover. *Should we forget this, we will not forget it.*" The president of the convention, in answer to this blunt, but spirited address, used expressions full of respect and complacency. "The sentiments of FIVE THOUSAND Britons," said he, "devoted openly to the cause of mankind, exist without doubt, in the hearts of all the freemen in England." Copies of the address were ordered to be sent to all the armies and departments of the republic.

XXX. The national convention was now so elated with the amazing progress of their arms, and so confident of the propriety and rectitude of every measure proposed for their adoption, that they seem to have thought deliberation a drudgery, and reflection superfluous. In this spirit a decree was passed by acclamation in the assembly November the nineteenth 1792, in the following terms:—"The national convention declare, in the name of the French nation, that they will grant fraternity and assistance to all those people who wish to procure liberty. And they charge the executive power to send orders to the generals to give assistance to such people, and to defend citizens who have suffered and are

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now suffering in the cause of liberty." This famous decree, which deserved to be considered in no other light than as a magnificent and empty vaunt, was productive of very serious and important consequences. Two other decrees of the assembly also demand a specific notice: the one erecting the duchy of Savoy into an eighty fourth department of the French republic, contrary to a fundamental article of the constitution, by which she renounced all foreign conquest: the other, on the capture of Antwerp, declaratory of the freedom of navigation on the river Scheld.

XXXI. It was now that the English government began to discover their alarm at the rapidity and extent of the French conquests. Brabant, Flanders, and Liege had been subdued, and seemed perfectly disposed to fraternize with their conquerors. It was well known that in Holland a very considerable party of mal-contents sought an opportunity of declaring themselves openly against the prince of Orange. Lord Auckland, the English ambassador, was therefore directed to assure their high mightinesses, "that as the theatre of war was brought so near to the confines of their republic, his Britannic majesty was both ready and determined to execute with the utmost good faith the treaty of 1738." The states, in their answer to this declaration, professed the strongest belief, "that no hostile intentions were conceived by any of the belligerent powers against them." The native phlegm of the Hollander begat, in the more peaceful and steady, an aversion to bustle and activity: and a rooted hatred of the court party induced numbers to dissemble the expectation of what they most ardently wished. Hence the frequent and just observation, that *we* had officially forced their high mightinesses even into a war of defence, against their obvious interest or inclination.

XXXII. The period was now arrived, when our cabinet was determined to suppress no longer their approbation of the principles of the grand confederacy. But it was first requisite to dispose the nation to a proper acquiescence

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quiescence in their measures. The multitude in all countries act more from feeling than judgment. Whom they hate or fear they eagerly persecute, and are seldom delicate in the means, when they find the opportunity of satiating their vengeance. A supreme abhorrence of the French government had been two years since, -by Mr. Burke, wickedly, but successfully, excited in this country. He had told the nation, that the French "had put over their country an insolent tyranny, made up of cruel and inexorable masters, and that too of a description hitherto not known in the world. The powers and politics by which they have succeeded, are not those of great statesmen, or great military commanders, but the practices of incendiaries, assassins, house-breakers, robbers, spreaders of false news, forgers of false orders from authority, and other delinquencies of which ordinary justice takes cognizance." The causes of the deposition of the French monarch, and the nature of the provocations and injuries which preceded and produced that event, not being sufficiently understood in England, contributed also to make an impression very unfavourable on the minds of the generality of the people: and the horrid massacres of September completely alienated their minds from the revolution, although these shocking enormities could not in any rational sense be said to originate in the revolution, but merely and solely in the opposition made to its establishment. Artful advantage was taken of this disposition; every wish, every word, and every action, that was disagreeable to ministers, was construed into a dislike of the British constitution, and held to be an almost unequivocal proof of republican and revolutionary sentiments. The press teemed with inflammatory productions, and the pulpit rung with anathemas against republicans and levellers. Every measure directed against the French, or their admirers, however oppressive and illegal, now became sanctioned in the object of its direction. The nation was on a sudden struck with terror at the idea of political innovation of any kind, and the very name of REFORM became the subject of violent and indiscriminate

indiscriminate reprobation. Under the impression of this furious prejudice, an association openly countenanced by government was formed in London for the protection of liberty and property against republicans and levellers; and an innumerable multitude of pamphlets, in the popular form of letters, dialogues, and narratives, admirably fitted to inflame the passions, were by this means circulated throughout the kingdom, inculcating an unreserved submission to government, on the old exploded principles of toryism and high churchism. In one of the most notorious of these tracts, it was urged, in favor of monarchy, "that the king is in scripture called the LORD'S ANOINTED, but who, say these profound politicians, ever heard of an ANOINTED REPUBLIC?" The rage of associating spread rapidly through the kingdom; and in every county, and almost every town, resolutions were subscribed strongly expressive of loyalty and attachment to the king and constitution, and abhorrence of all levelling and republican doctrines. The populace entering with violence into these sentiments, and their passions being, by the methods now put in practice, dangerously excited, the cry of CHURCH and KING was vociferated with tremendous clamors from the Tamar to the Tweed; from the cliffs of Dover to the hills of Cheviot.

XXXIII. After the British cabinet had made such recent and repeated avowals of the right of France to form, alter, and model its internal government without foreign interference—after such unequivocal declarations of continued neutrality, and the warmest professions of amity and good understanding—it was undoubtedly a task of no small ingenuity to give a plausible colour to their rash and sudden accession to the armed combination of despots. Such a war was not to be undertaken upon open principle: it could not be supported by reason, but what was wanting in solid argument, was abundantly supplied by stratagem and artifice. At this gloomy period, appeals were only made to the passions—the understanding was never consulted. The pathetic case of

an unfortunate monarch, contrasted with the ferocious cruelties of a licentious and frantic populace, had successfully seized the feelings of a great portion of the British public: and where the mind is pre-occupied by animated passion, the voice of cool and sober reason sounds in vain. This disposition is in nature, and the nation was prepared for it by the eloquence and example of Mr. Burke. "We are so made," says he, "as to be affected at such spectacles with melancholy sentiments upon the unstable condition of mortal prosperity, and the tremendous uncertainty of human greatness: because in those natural feelings we learn great lessons; because in events like these our passions instruct our reason; when kings are hurled from their thrones by the supreme director of this great drama, and become the objects of insult to the base, and pity to the good." The prejudices of the people being thus excited, and "their reason subjected to the instruction of their passions," the nation was brought to concur in a ruinous and destructive war, which, by the losses and disgraces with which it has been since attended, has made Britain pay dear for the folly and madness in which it originated.

XXXIV. As the war however could be supported upon no political justice, as it held out no prospect of interest, nor could be undertaken without at least the appearance of violating our solemn engagements; it became necessary to devise some domestic urgency to render the intended measures of government completely palatable to the nation. His majesty was accordingly advised to issue another proclamation, December the first 1792, announcing the alarming intelligence, "that notwithstanding the late proclamation of the twenty first of May, the utmost industry was still employed by evil-disposed persons within this kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, with a view to subvert the laws and established constitution of this realm; and to destroy all order and government therein; and that a spirit of tumult and disorder *thereby* excited had lately shewn itself in acts of riot and INSURRECTION.—And that, these causes moving

him thereto, his majesty had resolved forthwith to embody part of the militia of the kingdom." On the same day, another proclamation was issued for convening the parliament (which stood prorogued to the third of January) on the thirteenth of December; the law requiring, that if the militia be drawn out during the recess of parliament, and this it can only be in case of invasion or actual *insurrection*, parliament shall be assembled in the space of fourteen days. If credit be given to the language of these proclamations, the political state of the kingdom, which depended upon the wisdom, vigilance, and energy of government, was at this time in the convulsed agonies of a mortal disease. Without any external hostilities either to make or resist—without the conviction or even accusation of one individual, for attempting to excite sedition or insurrection—without the example of one pain, penalty or punishment having been inflicted upon a person guilty of turbulence or rebellion—his majesty's ministers thought themselves warranted to take these bold and daring measures. Bounties were now offered to landmen and seamen; naval armaments were put into preparation in all the dockyards: the army was drawn into a focus near the metropolis: and the tower was put into a posture of defence. The public alarm caused by these proceedings was inexpressible. Those who were convinced of the existence of a PLOT, thought it so much the more terrible, from its being invisible and incomprehensible. At this dreadful period of infatuation and terror, the nation was convulsed from the extremities to the centre. Every man looked on his neighbour with an eye of suspicious suspicion. Jealousy sat on every countenance, and banished from the cheerful and domestic circles of life, all the pleasures of social and friendly intercourse. In a word, the timid were agitated with fearful apprehensions—the licentious and disorderly exulted in the prospect of approaching commotions—but the reflecting few saw through the artifice, and sighed in solitude over the misfortunes of their country.

C H A P. III.

I. *Meeting of Parliament—Speech from the Throne.*—II. *Mr. Fox in Opposition to the Address.* III. *Mr. Windham for it.* IV. *Mr. Grey against it.* V. *Mr. Burke for it.* VI. *Mr. Erskine against it.* VII. *Opposition Party greatly reduced by Desertion.* VIII. *Motion for adjusting Differences with France by Negotiation by Mr. Fox.* IX. *Motion for sending a Minister to Paris, by Mr. Fox.* X. *Supported by Mr. Francis.* XI. *By Mr. Whitbread.* XII. *By Mr. Courtney.* XIII. *By Mr. Sheridan.* XIV. *Extraordinary Exertions of Opposition to avert the War.* XV. *The French Ambassador's Memorial on the relative Situation of France and England.* XVI. *Answered by Lord Grenville.* XVII. *Memorial of the Executive Council of France.* XVIII. *Lord Grenville's Reply.* XIX. *French Ambassador ordered to leave the Kingdom.* XX. *Reflections on the Death of the French King.* XXI. *Message from his Majesty to the Commons on French Affairs.* XXII. *Mr. Pitt's Speech on moving the Address on the above Message.* XXIII. *Supported by Lord Beauchamp.* XXIV. *Opposed by Lord Wycombe.* XXV. *Opposed by Mr. Whitbread.* XXVI. *Opposed by Mr. Fox.* XXVII. *The French declare War against England and Holland.* XXVIII. *A Selection of important State Papers, illustrative of the Grounds and Objects of the War.*

ON the meeting of parliament, which took place on the thirteenth of December, 1792, the expressions of the first proclamation were repeated in his majesty's speech; towards the conclusion of which the real views of the court became sufficiently manifest. It was intimated in the speech, "that his majesty had judged it necessary to embody a part of the militia, and to call the parliament together within the time limited for that purpose." It stated, as the grounds of these strong measures, "the seditious practices which had been discovered, and the spirit of tumult and disorder shewn in acts of RIOT and INSURRECTION, which required the interposition of a military force in support of the civil magistrate. The industry," it asserted "employed to excite discontent on various pretexts, and in different parts of the kingdom,

appeared to proceed from a design to attempt the destruction of our happy constitution, and the subversion of all order and government; and that this design had evidently been pursued in connection and concert with persons in foreign countries. I have," said his majesty, "carefully observed a strict neutrality in the present war on the continent, and have uniformly abstained from any interference with respect to the internal government of France; but it is impossible for me to see without the most serious uneasiness the strong and increasing indications which have appeared there, of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, as well as to adopt towards my allies, the states general, measures which are neither conformable to the law of nations, nor to the positive stipulations of existing treaties. Under these circumstances his majesty thought it right to have recourse to those means of prevention and internal defence with which he was entrusted by law, and to make some augmentation of his naval and military force."

II. On moving the address, in answer to the speech, a memorable debate arose. Never did the strength and superiority of Mr. Fox's genius appear perhaps so conspicuous as in this moment of national infatuation. He began by observing, "that the present was the most momentous crisis not only that he had ever known, but that he had ever read of in the history of this country; a crisis not merely interesting to ourselves and our own condition, but to all nations and to all men; and that on the conduct of parliament in this crisis depended not merely the fate of the British constitution, but perhaps the future happiness of mankind. His majesty's speech contains a variety of assertions of the most extraordinary nature. It was the duty of that house to inquire into the truth of these assertions, and in discharging this part of his duty, he should consider the speech from the throne as the speech of the minister, which his majesty's confidential servants had advised him to deliver; and as they were responsible for that advice, to *them* every observation of his should

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should be addressed. I state it therefore," said Mr. Fox, "to be my firm opinion and belief, that there is not one fact asserted in his majesty's speech which is not false—not one assertion or insinuation which is not unfounded. Nay, I cannot be so uncandid as to believe, that ministers themselves think them true. This charge upon his majesty's ministers is of so serious a kind, that I do not pronounce it lightly; and I desire that gentlemen will go fairly into the consideration of the subject, and manifest that spirit becoming the representatives of a great people, in a moment of such alarming danger. The leading and prominent feature of the speech is a wanton and base calumny on the people of Great Britain; an insinuation of so black a nature, that it demands the most rigorous inquiry, and the most severe punishment. The next assertion is, that there exists at this moment an insurrection in this kingdom. An insurrection!—where is it? where has it reared its head? Good God! an insurrection in Great Britain? No wonder that the militia were called out, and parliament assembled in the extraordinary way in which they have been—but where is it? Two gentlemen have delivered sentiments in commendation and illustration of the speech; and yet, though this insurrection has existed for fourteen days, they have given us no light whatever, no clue, no information where to find it. The right honorable magistrate who moved the address, tells us that, in his high municipal situation, he has received certain information which he does not think proper to communicate to the house. This is really carrying the doctrine of confidence to a length indeed. Not content with ministers leading the house of commons into the most extravagant and embarrassing situations, under the blind cover of confidence, we are now told that a municipal magistrate has information of an insurrection, which he does not choose to lay before the commons of England, but which he assures us is sufficient to justify the alarm that has spread over the whole country!—The honorable gentleman who seconded the motion tells us, that the insurrections are too notorious to be described. Such

is the information we receive from the gentlemen selected to move and second the address. I will take upon me to say, that it is not the notoriety of the insurrections which prevents them from communicating the particulars, but their non-existence. The speech goes on in the same strain of falsehood and calumny, and says, 'the industry employed to excite discontent on various pretexts, and in different parts of the kingdom, has appeared to proceed from a design to attempt the destruction of our happy constitution, and the subversion of all order and government.' I desire gentlemen to consider these words, and I demand of their honor and truth if they believe this assertion to be founded in fact. There have been, as I understand, and as every one must have heard, some slight riots in different parts; but I ask them were the various pretexts of these different tumults false, and used only to cover an attempt to destroy our happy constitution? I have heard of a tumult at Shields; of another at Leith; of some riot at Yarmouth, and of something of the same nature at Perth and Dundee. I ask gentlemen, if they believe that in each of these places the avowed object of the complaints of the people was not the real one—that the sailors at Shields, Yarmouth, &c. did not really want some increase of their wages, but were actuated by a design of overthrowing the constitution? Is there a man in England who believes this insinuation to be true? And in like manner of every other meeting, to which, in the present spirit, men may give the name of tumultuous assembling. I desire to know if there has been discovered any secret motive other than their open and avowed one. And yet, with this conviction in our minds, we are called upon to declare directly our belief and persuasion that these things are so. We are called upon to join in the libel upon our constituents. The answer to the speech says, 'that we know of the tumult and disorder,' but as to the actual insurrection, it more modestly makes us say, 'that we are sorry to hear there is an insurrection.' Of the tumults and disorders then, we have personal knowledge; but the insurrection we learn from his ma-

jelly's

A. D. 1792.

GEORGE III.

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jeſty's ſpeech." Mr. Fox next paſſed to the affairs of France, and adverted to an expreſſion of Mr. Wallace, who, in ſeconding the motion of addreſs, adduced as a proof that there exiſted in this country a dangerous ſpirit, 'the drooping and dejected aſpect of many perſons, when the tidings of Dumourier's ſurrender arrived in England.'— "Admitting the fact in its utmoſt extent," Mr. Fox ſaid, "he could not ſee that it was to be conſidered as a proof of diſcontent, and of preference to republican doctrines, that men ſhould droop and be dejected when they heard that the armies of deſpotiſm had triumphed over an army fighting for liberty.—What! could any man who loves the conſtitution of England, who feels its principles in his heart, wiſh ſucceſs to the duke of Brunſwick, after reading a manifeſto which violated every doctrine that Engliſhmen hold ſacred; which trampled under foot every principle of juſtice, humanity, and true government? He reprobated that ſyſtem of tyranny and coercion which inſiſted that Engliſhmen are not to dare to have any genuine feelings of their own; that they muſt rejoice by rule; that they muſt think but by order; that they muſt rejoice and grieve, juſt as it ſhall ſuit the taſte, the caprice, or the ends of miniſters. See," ſaid Mr. Fox, "to what lengths they carry this ſyſtem of intellectual oppreſſion! under various pretexts there have been tumults and diſorders, but the true deſign was to overturn the conſtitution.—So ſays the ſpeech—and mark the illustration of the right honorable magiſtrate. 'There have been various ſocieties eſta bliſhed in the city of London, inſtituted for the plausible purpoſe of merely diſcuſſing conſtitutional queſtions, but which were deſigned to propagate ſeditious doctrines.' So then, by this new ſcheme of tyranny, we are not to judge of the conduct of men by their overt acts, but are to arrogate to ourſelves at once the province and power of the Deity; we are to arraign a man for his ſecret thoughts, and to puniſh him becauſe we chooſe to believe him guilty! 'You tell me indeed,' ſays one of theſe municipal inquiſitors, 'that you want for an honeſt purpoſe—but I know better—Your plausible

plausible pretext shall not impose upon me—I know your seditious design. I will brand you for a traitor by my own proper authority.’ What innocence can be safe against such a power? What inquisitor of Spain, what agent of ancient or of modern tyranny, can hold so lost a tone? Well and nobly, seasonably and truly, has the noble earl (Wycombe) said, and I would not weaken the sentiment, by repeating the expression in terms less forcible than his own, but that the eternal truth cannot suffer by the feebleness of the terms in which it is conveyed. ‘There are speculative people in this country, who disapprove of the system of our government, and there must be such men as long as the land is free, for it is of the very essence of freedom for men to differ upon speculative points.’ Is it possible to conceive that it should enter into the imaginations of freemen to doubt of this truth? The instant that the general sense of the people shall question this truth, and that opinion shall be held dependant on the will of ministers and magistrates, from that moment, I say, I date the extinction of our liberties as a people. Our constitution was not made, thank God, in a day. It is the result of gradual and progressive wisdom. It has grown up in a series, and never, never has the guardian, protecting genius of England, been either asleep or satisfied.

“O but man, proud man!
Drest in a little brief authority,
Plays such frantastic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep.”

Now it seems the constitution is complete—now we are to stand still. We are to deride the practice and the wisdom of our forefathers; we are to elevate ourselves with the constitution in our hands, and to hold it forth to a wondering world as a model of human perfection. Away with all future improvement, for it is impossible; away with all future melioration of the state of man in society, for it is needless. Let no man touch this work of man, it is like the work of heaven, perfect in all its parts; and, unlike every other work of man, it is neither capable of

perversion, nor subject to decay. Such is the presumptuous language that we hear; and not content with this haughty tone, they imitate the celebrated anathema of Brother Peter, in the Tale of a Tub, and exclaim, 'God confound you all eternally, if you offer to believe otherwise.' Now this sir," continued Mr. Fox, "is the crisis which I think so truly alarming. We are come to the moment, when the question is, whether we shall give to the king, that is, to the executive government, complete power over our thoughts. Whether we are to resign the exercise of our natural faculties to the ministers for the time being, or whether we shall maintain, that in England no man is criminal, but by the commission of overt acts forbidden by the law. This I call a crisis more imminent and tremendous than any that the history of this country ever exhibited. I am not so ignorant," said Mr. Fox, "of the present state of men's minds, and of the ferment artfully created, as not to know that I am now advancing an opinion likely to be unpopular. It is not the first time that I have incurred the same hazard. But I am as ready to meet the current of popular opinion now running in favor of those high lay doctrines, as in the year 1783, I was to meet the opposite torrent, when it was said, that I wished to sacrifice the people to the crown. I will do now, as I did then—I will act against the cry of the moment, in the confidence that the reflection of the people will bear me out. I know well that there are societies who have published opinions, and circulated pamphlets containing doctrines tending, if you please, to subvert our establishments. I say that they have done nothing unlawful in this, for these pamphlets have not been suppressed by law. Shew me the law that orders these books to be burnt, and I will acknowledge the illegality of their proceeding; but if there be no such law, you violate the law in acting without authority. You have taken upon you to do that for which you have no warrant, and you vote they are guilty. What is the course prescribed by law? If any doctrines are published tending to subvert the constitution in church and state, you may take cognizance

nizance of the fact in a court of law. What have you done? Taken upon you by your own authority to suppress them! to erect every man not merely into an inquisitor, but into a judge, into a spy, into an informer—to set father against father—brother against brother, and neighbour against neighbour, and in this way you expect to maintain the peace and tranquillity of the country! You have gone upon the principles of slavery in all your proceedings; you neglect in your conduct the foundation of all legitimate government, the rights of the people, the rights of man. And setting up this bugbear, you spread a panic for the very purpose of sanctifying this infringement, while again the very infringement begets and engenders the evil which you dread. One extreme naturally leads to another. Those who dread republicanism, fly for shelter to the crown. Those who desire reform, and are calumniated, are driven by despair to republicanism. And this is the evil that I dread. These,” continued Mr. Fox, “are the extremes into which these violent agitations hurry the people, to the gradual decrease of that middle order of men, who dread as much republicanism on the one hand, as they do despotism on the other. That middle order of men, who have hitherto preserved to this country all that is dear in life, I am sorry to say it is daily lessening; but permit me to say, that while my feeble voice continues, it shall not be totally extinct; there shall at least be one who will, in this ferment of extremes, preserve the centre point. I may be abused by one side, I may be libelled by the other; I may be branded at one and the same time with the terms of firebrand and luke-warm politician; but though I love popularity, and own that there is no external reward so dear to me as the good opinion and confidence of my fellow citizens, yet no temptation of such complacency shall ever induce me to join any association that has for its object a change in the basis of our constitution, or an extension of any of those bases beyond the just proportion. I will stand in the gap, and oppose myself to all the wild projects of a new fangled theory, as much as against the monstrous iniquity

iniquity of exploded doctrines. I think the latter is more our present danger than the former. I see not merely in the panic of the timorous, but in the acts of the designing, cause for alarm against the most abhorrent doctrines. The new association act with little disguise. One of them I must applaud for the sincerity of its practice. Mr. chairman Reeves says, that they will not only *prosecute*, but they will *convince* men, and they recommend, among other publications, a hand-bill intitled, 'A pennyworth of truth,' in which, among other odd things, it is said, 'have you not read the bible? Do you not know that it is there written, that the king is the Lord's anointed? But did you ever hear of his having anointed a republic?' Such is the manner in which these associations are to convince the minds of men! In the course of the present century, their recommendation would have been prosecuted as high treason. In the years 1715 and 1745, to have dared to say that kings derive their power from divine right, would have been prosecuted as treason; and I ask you, if, even now, this is the way to inculcate the principles of genuine loyalty? No, sir! thank God, the people of this country have a better ground of loyalty to the house of Brunswick than divine right, namely, that they are the sovereigns of their own election; that their right is not derived from superstition, but from the choice of the people themselves; that it originated in the only genuine fountain of all royal power, the will of the many; and that it has been strengthened and confirmed by the experience of the blessings they have enjoyed, because the house of Brunswick has remembered the principles upon which they have received the crown. It is rather extraordinary, sir, that they should hold such a language at this precise moment: that they should think it right to abuse republics, at the very moment we are called upon to protect the republic of Holland; to spread the doctrine that kings only have divine right, may indispose your allies to receive your proposed succour. They may not choose to receive into their country your admirals
and

and generals, who being appointed by this king, in divine right, must partake of the same anger, and be sworn enemies to all forms of government not so sanctified.— Surely, independent of the falshood and the danger at home of such doctrines, it is the height of impolicy at this time to hold them in regard even to our neighbours. It may be asked, would I prosecute such papers? To this I answer very candidly, I would not. I never yet saw the seditious paper, that I would have thought it necessary to prosecute; but that by no means implies but that emergencies might make it proper; but surely there is nothing so essential to the true check of sedition, as impartiality in prosecution. If a government wishes to be respected, they must act with the most rigorous impartiality, and must shew that they are as determined to prevent the propagation of doctrines injurious to the rights of the people, as they are those hostile to the rights of the crown. If men are to be encouraged to rally round the one standard, you must not, you ought not, to prevent volunteers from rallying round the other, unless you desire to stifle in the breasts of men the surest and most active principle of obedience, belief in your impartiality. When I first heard," continued Mr. Fox, "that the militia were called out, I felt more anxiety and consternation than ever possessed my mind. I thought that certainly they had heard of some actual insurrection, or impending invasion. But when I heard that they were not called out to enable ministers to send the troops to any distant part, to Ireland or to Scotland (where they might know of disturbances, though I did not) but that troops were assembling round London, I firmly believed the whole to be a fraud; for I have friends in and about London, as intelligent as vigilant, as much interested in the tranquillity of the metropolis as the right honourable magistrate; and I was confident that an insurrection could not actually exist in London without being known. I pronounced it in my own mind to be a fraud; and I pronounce it here to be so. I am not given to make light assertions in this house, nor do I desire to receive implicit belief

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belief. I deprecate confidence on my bare assertion. On the contrary, I state, that I believe this pretext to be a fraud, and I intreat you to inquire, that you may ascertain the truth. I know that there are societies who have indulged themselves, as I think, in silly and frantic speculations, and who have published toasts, &c. that are objectionable; but that there is any insurrection, or that any attempt was making to overthrow the constitution, I deny. Now if this assertion of ministers is a falshood, is it an innocent falshood? Are the people of this country play-things in the hands of ministers, that they may frighten them and disturb them at pleasure? Are they to treat them as some weak, jealous-pated, and capricious men treat their wives and mistresses—alarm them with false stories, that they may cruelly feast on the torture of their apprehensions, and delight in the susceptibility that drowns them in tears? Have they no better enjoyment than to put forth false alarms, that they know may draw from the people the soothing expressions of agitated loyalty? Or do they think that these expressions, generously, readily made in favor of the king, whom the people rationally love, may extend in its influence to all the persons that are near his throne? Indulging in this passion, they may keep us incessantly in the tumult of apprehension, until at last they so habituate the mind to dread the evil in this quarter, as to look for it in no other, or to den it by repeated shocks of fiction into an insensibility of real attack. His majesty, in the next passage of his speech," continues Mr. Fox, "brings us to the apprehension of a war. I shall refrain at this time from saying all that occurs to me on this subject, because I wish to keep precisely to the immediate subject: but never surely had this country so much reason to wish for peace; never was a period so little favorable to a rupture with France, or with any power. I am not ready to subscribe exactly to the idea of the noble lord, of the propriety of a resolution never to go to war unless we are attacked; but I wish that a motion was proposed by some person to express our disapprobation of entering upon

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upon any war, if we can by any honorable means avoid it. Let no man be deterred by the dread of being in a minority. A minority saved this country from a war against Russia. And surely it is our duty, as it is true policy to exert every means to avert that greatest of national calamities. In 1789 we all must remember that Spain provoked this country by an insult, which is a real aggression; we were all agreed on the necessity of the case, but did we go headlong to war? No, we determined with becoming fortitude on an armed negotiation. We did negotiate, and we avoided a war. But now we disdain to negotiate. Why? Because we have no minister at Paris. Why have we no minister there? Because France is a republic! And so we are to pay in the blood and treasure of the people for a punctilio! If there are discontents in the kingdom, sir, this is the way to inflame them. It is of no consequence to any people what is the form of government with which they may have to treat. It is with the governors, whatever may be the form, that in common sense and policy they can have to do, and if they should change their form and change their governors, their course would remain the same. Having no legitimate concern with the internal state of any independent people, the road of common sense is simple and direct. That of pride and punctilio is as tangled as it is serpentine. Is the pretext the opening of the Scheld? I cannot believe that such an object can be the real cause. I doubt, even if a war on this pretext would be undertaken with the approbation of the Dutch. What was the conduct of the French themselves under their depraved old system, when the good of the people never entered into the contemplation of the cabinet? The emperor threatened to open the Scheld in 1786. Did the French go to war with him instantly to prevent it? No, they opened a negotiation, and prevented it by interfering with their good offices. Why have not we so interfered? Because, forsooth, France is an unanointed republic! Oh! miserable, infatuated Frenchmen! Oh! lame and inconsiderate politicians! Why, instead

instead of breaking the holy vial of Rheims, why did you not pour some of the sacred oil on the heads of your executive council, that the pride of states might not be forced to plunge themselves and you into the horrors of war, rather than be contaminated by your acquaintance! How short-sighted were you to believe that the prejudices of infants had departed with the gloom of ignorance, and that states were grown up to a state of manhood and reason! This," said Mr. Fox, "naturally brings us back again to the business of this day, namely, whether any address should be agreed to or not. I desire then to put it seriously to the conscience and honor of gentlemen to say if they are not aiding the object of republicans and levellers, if they shall agree to plunge this country into a war, or shall agree to do any business, or to give any pledge whatever to the crown, until they inquire and ascertain whether there is an insurrection in this country or not? Shall we declare war without inquiring whether we are also to have commotions at home? Shall we pledge our constituents to submission, to compliance, without first proving to them that the strong measure of government has been authorized by truth? If you would have the laws respected by the people, I say again you must begin by shewing that they are respected from above. If you do not prove to the people that there is an actual insurrection (for I leave out impending invasion and rebellion, as these are not even pretended) you cannot withhold from them the knowledge that you have acted illegally, and how can you expect rational obedience to the laws when you yourselves counteract them? When you set up the *ratio suaseria* as the *ratio iustifica*, the people will clearly discern the futility and rashness of your logic, and translate at once your terms into their true English of real causes and false prettexts. *Ut ameris amabilis esto*, is as true in government and legislation as it is in manners and private life, and is as well established by experience. The people will not be cheated. They will look round and demand where this danger is to be seen. Is it in England? they

see it overflowing in expressions of loyalty, and yet they libel it with imputations of insurrection. In Ireland you know there is danger, and dare not own it. There you have prorogued the parliament to the seventeenth instant, but not to meet till the end of January for the dispatch of business, though you know that there a most respectable and formidable convention (I call it formidable because I know nothing so formidable as reason, truth, and justice) will oblige you by the most cogent reasons to give way to demands which the magnanimity of the nation ought to have anticipated. There you have thus prorogued the parliament, and deprived yourselves of the means of doing that gracefully which you must do, and which you ought to have done long ago, to subjects as attached to their king, as abundantly endowed with every manly virtue, as any part of the united kingdom. And while the claims of generous and ill-treated millions are thus protracted, and in addition to the hardship of their condition, they are insulted with the imprudent assertion of the tyrannical ascendancy, there is a miserable mockery held out of alarms in England which have no existence, but which are made the pretext of assembling the parliament in an extraordinary way, in order in reality to engage you in a foreign contest. What must be the fatal consequence when a well-judging people shall decide, what I sincerely believe, that the whole of this business is a ministerial manœuvre? Will they own the real truth, and say that they wanted a pretext for assembling parliament to make up for their want of vigilance? They must take their choice, and submit to incur the indignation of their country, or feel themselves in a state of contempt. There are men who in this very act give them the praise of vigilance. They did all this, to be sure, with a little harmless fraud, to prevent evils. Let us," said Mr. Fox, "examine their claim to vigilance. This vigilant ministry saw, nay, if we may take their character from their associates, hoped that France was on the brink of falling a sacrifice to the united force of Austria and Prussia; the two powers of all others whose union would

would be the most dreadful thing to England; but they saw no danger in this conquest to England, though thereby these great military powers were to become maritime. They saw no danger in the union concerted between them, nay, when they had given away Poland in the mean time, because I suppose they thought when Oczakow was gone, the balance of Europe went with it, and they retreated out of the field with disgrace. They gave away Poland with as little compunction as honor, and with the unenviable certainty, that their blustering was laughed at and despised in every court in Europe. I know that some of them have inordinate self-complacency, yet I will not be so uncandid as to conceal my honest opinion, that there is not among them a single man whose talents for great and commanding policy have either attracted or secured the confidence of any quarter of Europe. Do they boast of their vigilance? The dextrous surrender of Oczakow, as they now know, might have saved the fall and ruin of Poland. Do they boast of their vigilance? And had they no apprehension of the union between Austria and Prussia? Had they such total reliance on the moderation of Prussia, on his intimate friendship with, his gratitude to, his confidence in our faithful cabinet! Do they boast of their vigilance? and yet saw nothing of their present dread for Holland and Brabant, on the thirtieth of September, when, to the joy of every man whose heart is warmed with the love of freedom, the duke of Brunswick retreated before the armies of France? Were they vigilant not to foresee the consequences of that retreat? or did they flatter themselves with the weak, the false hope that still the steadiness of men bred up in the trammels of tactics and discipline, would be an overmatch for the impetuosity of men animated by the glorious flame of liberty? If so, the battle of Jemmappe ought, I should think, to have shewn vigilant men their error. That happened on the sixth of November. On the same day the government of the Netherlands took to flight, and the news arrived in England on the tenth or twelfth. What did these vigilant ministers?

ters? On the seventeenth they prorogued the parliament to the third of January, without even saying that it was then to meet for the dispatch of business! And yet on these vigilant men we are to repose, though in the eyes of Europe, in the hearts of Englishmen, an armament in their hands is a proof and earnest of their future humiliation! They call, "said Mr. Fox, "for subsidiary aid from the loyalty of the people, and to procure this they have recourse to history, and look out for the lucky frauds of former times: they find one of the most lucky frauds was the popish plot in the reign of Charles the second. The same cry in the present moment they knew was impossible; but a similar one was feasible in the enemy against a republic. The protestant dissenters then, as now, were made the objects of terror, and every art was used to provoke the rage of ignorance and barbarity: the fraud was too successful. Many of my friends, from the best motives, were deluded into the snare, and that most calamitous of all measures, the proclamation, unfortunately for England, met with their countenance. I cannot better describe this calamity than by reading a passage from an eminent historian (Ralph) on the fatal consequences of the delusion of the popish plot. By comparing my friends on this occasion to the celebrated lord Russel at that time, I think that I cannot pay a better compliment to them, or, at the same time, a more just and deserved tribute to the memory of that excellent person. Both, in consequence of their high integrity and attachment to the country, have become the dupes of deception. The passage is as follows: 'But there were persons, it seems, ready to adopt his (Oates's) intelligence, imperfect, chimerical, or fictitious as it was, and to make use of it as a firebrand to light up such a flame of dissention as had like to have laid waste the kingdom; and of these, according to the distinction already made, some were weak and some were wicked. The weak were those who thought popery the greatest mischief that comprehended all others, who mistook prejudice for conviction, credulity for candor, and rigor for righteousness. These,

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These, however, meant well, though they acted ill; and while doing the drudgery of a party, persuaded themselves they were saving the nation. The wicked were the master politicians of the times, who considered kings not as they were good or ill in themselves, but as they were ill or good with respect to their own immediate views: now the plot, whether true or false, was formed of the happiest ingredients imaginable to advance their interest.' "Now, sir," said Mr. Fox, "let me address one word to my valued friends: let them reflect on the consequences of their recent delusion, not dissimilar to the above. The measure of the proclamation is now stated to be over—it has failed: let them avoid all farther snares of the same kind. They will reflect on the necessity of union from the experience of the advantages which have flowed from it. They cannot feel more sensibly than I do the benefits of the cordial co-operation of that body of men who have, through the whole of the present reign, had to struggle with prejudice as well as enmity. Let them recollect the manner in which the present ministers came into power, let them recollect the insidious attempts that have been made to disjoin them; and now that the fatal measure of the proclamation is over, let them avoid, I say, all farther snares of the same kind. These declarations, which it is now the fashion to sign, I certainly cannot in general approve. Of all that I have seen that of the merchants must best conciliate the approbation of constitutional men; but I see and hear on every side such violent doctrines and such afflicting measures, as no man who is actuated by the wish of preserving peace in this country can subscribe to. A noble lord, for whom I have a high respect, says he will move for a suspension of the habeas-corpus act. I hope not. I have a high respect for the noble lord; but no motive of personal respect shall make me inattentive to my duty. Come from whom it may, I shall, with my most determined powers, oppose so dreadful a measure. What, it may be asked, would I propose to do in hours of agitation like the present? I will answer openly. If there

there is a tendency in the dissenters to discontent, because they conceive themselves unjustly suspected and cruelly calumniated, what should I do? I would instantly repeal the test and corporation acts, and take from them thereby all cause of complaint. If there were any persons tinctured with a republican spirit, because they thought that the representative government was more perfect in a republic, I would endeavour to amend the representation of the commons, and to prove that the house of commons, though not chosen by all, should have no other interest than to prove itself the representative of all. If there were men dissatisfied in Scotland, or Ireland, or elsewhere, on account of disabilities and exemptions, of unjust prejudices, and of cruel restrictions, I would repeal the penal statutes; which are a disgrace to our law book. If there were other complaints of grievances, I would redress them where they were really proved; but, above all, I would constantly, cheerfully, patiently listen—I would make it known, that if any man felt, or thought he felt, a grievance, he might come freely to the bar of this house and bring his proofs. And it should be made manifest to all the world that where they did exist they should be redressed; where they did not, that it should be made manifest. If I were to issue a proclamation, this should be my proclamation—‘If any man has a grievance, let him bring it to the bar of the commons’ house of parliament, with the firm persuasion of having it honestly investigated.’ These are the subsidies that I would grant to government. What instead of this is done? Suppress the complaint—check the circulation of knowledge—command that no man shall read—or, that as no man under one hundred pounds a year can kill a partridge, that no man under twenty pounds or thirty pounds shall dare to read or think! I see,” continued Mr. Fox, “in Westminster the most extraordinary resolutions of parochial meetings. In the city, with which I am intimately connected, and to which I have high obligations, there have been resolutions and associations which mi-

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litate against every idea that I was ever taught to entertain both of law and constitution. In the parish of St. Anne, Soho, at the head of which parochial meeting I see a much respected friend of mine, Sir Joseph Banks, they have demanded a register of all the strangers living in the parish. In St. Clements, and elsewhere, publicans are threatened with the loss of their licences if they shall suffer any newspapers to be read in their houses that they shall think seditious. Good God! where did justices find this law? I have always thought that there was no one thing of which the law was more justly jealous, than the exercise of the discretionary power given to justices with regard to licences, and that above all things it was not permitted them to suffer political motives to interfere in the giving or withholding licences. And publicans are to be made judges of libel! No newspaper or pamphlet is to be read but such as they shall determine to be free from sedition! No conversation is to be suffered but what they shall judge to be loyal! And yet in this very house, not more than a twelvemonth ago, when I brought in a bill with regard to libels, we all heard it asserted that the knowledge of what was a libel could not be safely left to the determination of twelve jurymen—it could be judged of only by sages in the law. How can these publicans be conceived capable of judging, or by what rule are they to act? Are they to take their opinions from these associations? They recommend to them that loyal paper, ‘Thomas Bull to John Bull,’ where, among other things, it is pretty plainly insinuated that it would have been well if Petion, the late mayor of Paris, had been assassinated when in England, and that it would be an excess of virtue to exterminate the dissenters! Are they to be told that such writings as these are perfectly harmless and praiseworthy, but that discussions on the constitution, debating societies, (although, by the bye, I never knew London without debating societies, and I cannot see by what law any magistrate can interrupt their legal discussions) and all papers and conversations, where are free opinions on the nature of government, are libellous?

libellous? What must be the consequence of all this, but that these publicans must decide that that is libellous which is disapproved of by ministers for the time being, and by these associations, and that all freedom of opinion and all the fair and impartial freedom of the press is utterly destroyed. I love the constitution," said Mr. Fox, "as it is established: it has grown up with me as a prejudice and as a habit, as well as from conviction. I know that it is calculated for the happiness of man, and that its constituent branches of king, lords, and commons could not be altered or impaired, without entailing on this country the most dreadful miseries. It is the best adapted to England, because, as the noble earl truly said, the people of England think it the best; and the safest course is to consult the judgment and gratify the predilections of a country. Heartily convinced as I am, however, that to secure the peace, strength, and happiness of the country, we must maintain the constitution against all innovation, yet I do not think so highly and superstitiously of any human institution as to believe it is incapable of being perverted; on the contrary, I believe that it requires an increasing vigilance on the part of the people to prevent the decay and dilapidations to which every edifice is subject. I think too that we may be laid asleep to our real danger by these perpetual alarms to loyalty, which, in my opinion, are daily sapping the constitution. Under the pretext of guarding it from the assaults of republicans and levellers, we run the hazard of leaving it open on the other and more feeble side. We are led insensibly to the opposite danger, that of increasing the power of the crown, and of degrading the influence of the house of commons. It is in such moments as the present that the most dangerous, because unexpected, attacks may be made on our dearest rights; and let us only look back to the whole course of the present administration, and we shall see that from their outset to the present day it has been their invariable object to degrade the house of commons in the eyes of the people, and to diminish its power and influence in every possible way.

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way. It was not merely in the outset of their career, when they stood up against the declared voice of the house of commons, that this spirit was manifested, but uniformly, progressively through their whole ministry, the same disposition has been shewn, until at last it came to its full undisguised demonstration on the question of the Russian war, when the house of commons was degraded to the lowest state of insignificance and contempt, in being made to retract its own words, and to acknowledge that it was of no consequence or avail what were its sentiments on any one measure. The minister has regularly acted upon this sort of principle—‘I do not care what the house of commons may think, or what may be thought of them—it is not their verdict that is to acquit me in any moment of difficulty or any hour of trial. I will agitate the people without—I will see whether they will bear me up in my measures; and as for the house of commons, if in the height of their confidence in me they shall be made to say one thing to-day, I will make them, with equal ease, and without regard to their character, say another to-morrow.’ Such is the true English of the principle of the minister’s conduct, and this principle he has constantly acted upon, to the vilification of the popular branch of the constitution. What is this but to make it appear that the house of commons is in reality what Thomas Paine, and writers like him, say it is, namely, that it is not the true representative and organ of the people. In the same way, and by the same language, might Thomas Paine bring a slander upon our courts of law, and upon the trial by jury. In the same tone he might assert, ‘Do not tell me what a jury of twelve men may say of my book—do not tell me what these associations say—I reject all tribunals, either constituted by legal authority, or self-erected. Give me the people for my judges, and I will prove that my doctrines are agreeable to them.’ Such language would square completely with that of ministers, and constantly, uniformly have they resorted to the dangerous innovation of supporting themselves, without regard to the opinion of the house of commons,

mons, by appeals one day to the crown, the next to the lords, and the third to the people; uniformly striving to exhibit parliament in the disgraceful and pitiful light of complete incapacity. Is it not wonderful that all the true constitutional watchfulness of England should be dead to the only true danger that the day exhibits, and that they should be roused only by the idiotic clamor of republican frenzy and of popular insurrection which do not exist? Sir," concluded Mr. Fox, "I have done my duty. I have with the certainty of opposing myself to the furor of the day, delivered my opinion at more length than I intended, and perhaps I have intruded too long on the indulgence of the house. I have endeavoured to persuade you against the indecent haste of committing yourselves to these assertions of an existing insurrection; until you shall make a rigorous inquiry where it is to be found. To avoid involving the people in the calamity of a war, without at least ascertaining the internal state of the kingdom, and prevent us from falling into the disgrace of being, as heretofore, obliged perhaps in a week to retract every syllable that we are now called upon to say." To carry this into effect he concluded with moving an amendment, simply pledging the house, "that inquiry should be made into the facts stated in his majesty's speech."

III. Mr. Windham said, "that strange as it might seem, he should vote this night with those whose measures he had uniformly, and conscientiously reprobated, in opposition to those whose political sentiments on almost every occasion were in unison with his own. It might seem strange that he should be found defending the measures of persons with whom he had been so long in political hostility, and in some degree reprobating the principles of some of his political associates. He had his attachments, he confessed, and those attachments in lesser considerations might have some influence even upon his judgment. But upon a subject of the importance of the present he was determined to be governed solely by a sense of duty.—Indeed he had often given his opinion in that house, that in the year 1784, most unconstitutional measures

measures had been adopted, and unconstitutional principles maintained; and on the same grounds he had often since reprobated the conduct of ministers, who had pretty uniformly adhered to the system upon which they had come into power; nay, he was of opinion, that to the proceedings of 1784, we might ascribe the evils of our present situation; but the question now was, whether they were right in the present instance? and here he confessed he could not agree with his right honorable friend (Mr. Fox) in almost any of the sentiments he had expressed to-night.—They differed either upon principle or on the application of principle on all the points of this subject. The foundation, however, of their difference lay in the state of this country at the present moment. ‘Was the country at this moment in a state of danger, aye or no?’ He was told,” he said, “that there was no real cause for alarm among the people; that the only alarm that was felt had been created by government. Government must certainly have had strange and wonderful powers indeed to produce the alarm every day expressed in different parts. No, there were serious and well founded alarms from the conduct not of the officers of government, but from those who had sworn an enmity to all government.—Did not the whole country feel it? Was not every town, village, or hamlet filled with apprehension? Could a man enter into his own house, or could he walk in a field, without observing that it occupied the attention of all ranks and descriptions of people? this was what his right honorable friend had been pleased to make a matter of argument, but what was really mere matter of observation; a man should not reason on the probability or improbability of these events, but should observe upon the fact, and attend to the relation of others. If a man confined himself in one room of his own house, he would know no more of what was going on in the next than he would know what was going on in another country; but if he chose to be vigilant, he might know a good deal more. So in the present case, if a man would not believe any thing but what he saw, nor see any thing but what

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he liked, it was not very probable that he would discover much of the alarm in question. But if he was at the pains to observe, the alarm was visible enough. Had he observed it? Yes. He had seen the intention of the enemies of the present constitution expressed in various shapes. He had seen it in the confidence of their agents; in the boldness of those who wished the subversion of the constitution. He appealed to the house, whether they did not know and feel that there was a general alarm all over the country. The next point to be considered, in the order which his right honorable friend had taken, was how far it might be fit to check the cause of this mischief by law, the question of the policy of doing it he had determined in the negative. It was true that the measures now pursued over the country were such as had never been employed before: but it must be observed, in answer to this, that there never had been such an occasion before. Speculative opinions had been published from time to time in this country, and they might have been continued to be published, but the manner of publishing as well as the works published of late were entirely new. He believed the society for constitutional information began the system now pursued; it was soon transplanted into another country, in the fertile soil of which it had thriven so well as to overthrow all order, and establish confusion. Having this glorious effect by transplantation, it was now brought to this country, for the purpose of producing the same effect. The machine was so well constructed, there was such skill, contrivance, and management in the engineers, that unless parliament were on their guard, and the sensible and honest part of the community active in counteracting their designs, the whole form of our government might be easily subverted. He spoke not from mistrust merely, or rumor, but he knew, and it was notorious that there had been and was now a constant communication between persons in Paris and persons in London, the object of which was the destruction of our present form of government. This sort of counter-alliance of the Englishman in Paris, and the

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Frenchman in London, had been regularly formed, and the effect of it was felt already in an alarming degree, for in every town, in every village, nay almost in every house, these worthy gentlemen had their agents, who regularly disseminated certain pamphlets; these agents were vigilant and industrious; delivered these pamphlets gratis; a proof there must be somewhere a society to defray the expence, for these agents could not afford to be thus generous to the public without assistance; they could not pay for them out of their own pockets. No, the whole was a well arranged methodized plan, for gradually undermining the principles of the British constitution. The system he had alluded to had been carried on all over the country, more or less; in the northern part of this kingdom great pains had been taken with the poorer part of the community, to wean their affections from government; and it was a fact notoriously known that the whole plan was supported by a purse, which he believed was made up in France: this he did not know, but he believed it to be the case. In answer to this, it might be answered, that the French were not likely to contribute much money, having little or none to spare, upon this or any other such occasion; to which the reply was obvious. Those who are in a state of desperation have always the most money to squander upon acts of profligacy and dishonor; besides, poor and wretched as they were, yet such surps, however large to individuals, could not be of any great consequence to a nation. The manner in which this business was conducted was very artful. On putting these works of sedition into the hands of the labourer, they always told him they were intended for his instruction. They represented their societies as places for the instruction of the lower class.— The proper meaning of fair instruction was by education to teach a man a mode of reasoning. But this instruction was nothing more than a general conveyance of particular opinions. Again, they said that their object was the propagating truth, and the improvement of the condition of man. How well these points had been gain-

ed we had recent instances. It was an attempt to reverse the order of society altogether. From the culprit we had been accustomed to hear laid down, as the foundation of all happiness, obedience to the laws. From the Jacobin club nothing was inculcated but disobedience to the law, and the doctrine that those who make laws in this country have no competent authority to make laws. These sentiments, if generally received, would speedily overturn all order and government. The art with which these sentiments were introduced among the lower classes of society was consummate; they pretended that they taught nothing but philosophical truths; but instead of arguing philosophically in their books, they made round assertions, and they acted wisely for their purpose by so doing; for the persons to whom they addressed themselves were incapable of pursuing a subject logically from premises to a conclusion; nor would this mode of reasoning suit their cause. Not even these assertions were made until they had prepared the mind to receive them; they gained the affections first by flattering the passions, and then they proceeded to instruct, as they termed it. Whether the law, even in the freest country in the world, ought to permit every man to preach what doctrine he thought fit, and gain over as many proselytes as he could, was a question that had often been suggested, and which he should determine in the negative; for these truths, as they were termed, would dwindle into nothing, if the sentiment built upon them could be seen, and the consequences of them anticipated; but these poor peasants had not the power of deducting consequences, and therefore they listen to assertion. Nor could he see the harm there was of preventing all endeavours to explain to a poor, illiterate fellow, whose extent of powers was but barely adequate to the task of procuring food for his own subsistence, points which had divided the opinions of the ablest writers. He saw no great loss to society from putting an end to public-house political clubs, and ale-house debates on politics; in short, he saw no reason why they should

should not be altogether suppressed. Next came the question, 'where will you draw the line, whom will you take up, and whom will you suffer to pass by; or shall no man give his opinion upon the constitution?' He said, "he could not distinguish in this case by any previous principle which must depend, as all acts of the law did, upon the discretion of a competent tribunal, a jury. This point he illustrated by several observations upon the various denominations of homicide and libels. But would he call that treason in duodecimo which was innocent in quarto? That was what he did mean, because much of the guilt in these cases depended upon the *quo animo*; and he who printed seditious sentiments would take care, if he intended mischief, that they should be within the reach of the lowest order. Many of these persons, it seems, had been calumniated by imputing to them motives which they did not avow, and intentions which they denied. This observation was specious but not solid, for it was well known that they did intend what they did not profess, and this was demonstrable by their actions; some indeed, when questioned, confessed a direct intention of subverting our government. If they were asked if they were friends to our government, they answered yes.— But they wanted no king, no lords: all they wanted was a perfect representation of the people. Such a constitution would no more be the constitution of England than the constitution of Venice; in short, their view was to destroy all hereditary right, and perhaps afterwards to attempt an equalization of property; for one of their books stated, that a country could not be said to be truly free, where there was so much inequality among its members. Some gentlemen affected to treat these things with contempt, but they ought not, in his mind, to be so regarded. It was true the high ranks of life were not contaminated by these infamous principles; but if they were to cast their eyes downward, they would see there lurking underneath a sort of subterranean heat, that might burst forth with prodigious violence, if not immediately

mediately extinguished. With regard to the combined armies that marched towards the capital of France, he believed their motives were good, and therefore he wished them success; and so he should had their motives been ever so bad: that which they opposed was worse than any consequence that could have resulted from their success.—He had been told, indeed, that no country ought to intermeddle with the internal affairs of another. This might be right in a limited sense, but it could not be so in the length insisted upon by some modern politicians: he could conceive many instances in which it ought to be departed from. Two nations might quarrel, one might be clearly in the right, and the other clearly in the wrong; the continuance of their contest might affect the interest of a third nation. Such a nation had a right to interfere. But did France pursue only her own internal regulation? Did she keep good faith in her decree ‘that she abandoned for ever all ideas of foreign conquest?’ She professed indeed good will to all mankind, but before a Frenchman could be faithful, his nature must be changed.—It was their object to lower this country, and in that they would persist until they should accomplish their wishes, if possible.—What was to be said for them in the war against the king of Sardinia? Still worse was their conduct at Geneva; but, above all, who would applaud their decree, ‘to give liberty to mankind?’ Was it not avowing an intention to disturb every power in Europe? They talked, indeed, of giving to every place where their arms were victorious, a choice of the form of government; but did they wait for the sense of the majority? Not they indeed. When two or three were gathered together, that was enough for them. What were their intentions with respect to this country? Refer to the correspondence of the Jacobin club of Manchester and the Jacobin club of Paris. Did any man believe that they would hesitate to bring an army into the heart of this country, if they thought themselves safe in so doing? But they did not depend so much upon themselves as they did upon their bullies in other countries. Thus,
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from all circumstances, minute in themselves, but of the most serious importance when combined, it would appear that the alarm was not fictitious, but real. Ministers therefore, in point of principle, had acted rightly in calling out the militia. They might be a little irregular in point of form, but as they had observed the spirit of the constitution, they had his cordial support."

IV. Mr. Grey began with stating, "that he concurred with his honorable friend in considering the present as a most momentous period. He regretted the necessity he was under of opposing the honorable gentleman who had spoken last, while he supported an administration whose uniform bad conduct was still more aggravated by their present measures. The situation of danger in which the country was at present placed, arose not from the combination of levellers and republicans, who he believed were but few in number, and still less formidable; not from any riots which had originated in circumstances purely local; not from any insurrections, the existence of which had been attached to no particular spot; but the danger arose from the measures of ministers, which had shaken the pillars of the public security, which had threatened our commerce with the most fatal consequence from a war, and which had even been attended with a still more serious evil, by introducing a practice hostile to the principles of the constitution itself. The honorable gentleman who had spoke last, had not made the distinction between alarm and danger. He had mistaken his own apprehensions for the danger of which he was afraid. He was ready to allow that writings of a certain tendency had been circulated in great profusion, in consequence of the very means which had been taken to suppress them; but the seditious effects which these writings were stated to have had upon the minds of the people he completely denied. He did not believe the minds of the people to be so perverse as to be disaffected to a constitution from which they enjoyed so many blessings. Their natural good sense would prevent them from adopting any doctrines subversive of that constitution. He was not a friend

to

to Paine's doctrines, but he was not to be deterred by a name from acknowledging that he considered the rights of man, as the foundation of every government, and those who stood out against these rights as traitors against the people. The rights of the people, he concurred with an honorable writer, in regarding as their advantage, and the dearest right of Englishmen was the possession of their constitution, while it was maintained on its true principles; but if it was abused, the effect must infallibly be to inflame and heat men's minds, and ministers alone would be responsible for the consequences which might ensue. If the people in this country, if the people in Scotland complain of grievances, let these grievances be removed, and their discontents would cease. Upon this principle he had last session brought forward his proposal for reform. If the people were put in possession of their rights, there would be no longer any fear either of internal or foreign danger. Into the question of a war with France he should not enter; he should only remark, "that a heavy responsibility must fall upon ministers if they had not taken every possible precaution to avert this calamity." He then entered into a detail of the conduct of ministers, particularly in raising the late alarm. "The bringing forward the business of an insurrection," he said, "was to be considered as a device of the master-politicians of the time.— He desired that the whole conduct of ministers might be attended to upon this occasion. On the twenty first of May, they had issued a proclamation against seditious writings, which, as it was particularly understood to be directed against Paine's publications, had excited a curiosity with respect to that work, where formerly it was not known. During the summer nothing more had been heard, no prudent precaution had been taken. The retreat of the duke of Brunswick, which he, along with his honorable friend, as well as every friend of freedom, considered as matter of joy and exultation, had indeed thrown them into confusion; still, however, they left matters to be regulated by chance; nothing was heard but of Mr. Pitt enjoying the sweets of his new office, and

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Mr. Dundas in Scotland reaping the fruits of his well earned popularity. All at once, on the first of December, London was surrounded with troops; the duke of Richmond threw himself into that post of danger, the tower; an alarm was excited of which neither the object nor the cause could be discovered. His honorable friend had read an extract from an historian on the subject of the popish plot; he should read a passage from another historian on the same subject, which, in his opinion, might, with great propriety, be applied now to the state of the public mind; and the impression produced by the alarm excited by ministers: 'Some mysterious design was still suspected in every enterprize and profession: each breath of rumor made the people start with anxiety. While in this timorous, zealous disposition, the cry of a plot all on a sudden struck their ears: they were awakened from their slumber, and like men affrighted and in the dark, took every figure for a spectre. The terror of each man became a source of terror to another; and an universal panic being diffused, reason and argument and common sense and common humanity lost all influence over them.' If ministers could not state the cause of the alarm which they had excited, they had subjected themselves to the severe censure both of that house and the public: he could not by any means allow that the opinions of an individual should be set above the laws, and therefore he was of opinion that none but a specific cause could be admitted on this occasion as a justification of those extraordinary measures which had been pursued by government.

V. Mr. Burke said, "that this was indeed a day of trial of the constitution. He agreed with an honorable gentleman in regarding the present as a most momentous crisis, but for different reasons from those which he had assigned. He congratulated the house on the chief magistrate of the city of London having come forward in a manner so honorable to himself, and could not let slip this occasion of paying a just tribute to the services which the city of London had at different times rendered to the constitution, under whose auspices it had risen to its

its present opulence and grandeur. It had distinguished itself by the part which it acted both in the restoration and revolution. It was sensible how closely liberty and monarchy were connected in this country, that they were never to be found asunder; that they had flourished together a thousand years; and from this union resulted the glory and prosperity of the nation. While he did justice to the talents and eloquence of a right honorable gentleman, (Mr. Fox) whom nobody could more highly respect and admire than himself, and whom he should rejoice to see occupying an important station in the administration of the country, for which he was so well qualified, he could not help remarking, that on the present occasion he had taken up a great many invidious points, which he might have spared, without any injury to his argument. He had asserted that the statement of an insurrection was a calumny on the country. But did the proclamation say that the whole country was in a state of insurrection? He would ask the right honorable gentleman, whom he could only compare to Cicero, whether, when Cicero affirmed in the senate, that there existed within the walls of Rome itself a conspiracy for burning and destroying that great city, he was guilty of a libel upon the people of Rome, or only upon Cataline? The charge of insurrection made in the proclamation was not a charge made upon the country, but only upon some people in it. But the alarm which had been excited had been said to be artificial, and ranked among the number of false plots. The popish plot had been brought forward, as affording an instance of a similar device, for the purpose of creating alarm, to what had been employed on this occasion. But were there no instances of real plots in the history of this country? What was become of the gun powder plot, and the different plots which were formed against queen Elizabeth? False plots would never have been believed, if there had not sometimes been true. This reasoning, therefore, against the reality of the alarm which had taken place, was by no means conclusive. He had been not a little surprised at a violent declamation in

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in favor of liberty, which had fallen from the right honorable gentleman, as if, on the present occasion, liberty was placed on the one hand, and despotism on the other. He, for his own part, declared himself to be not a defender of ministry or of opposition, but of the country in France he would affirm there existed no true liberty. As a proof that liberty was enjoyed, he would ask, is life, is property secure? Was this the case in France, where both were every moment exposed to danger, and where, instead of one *bastille*, a *bastille* was now erected in every parish? He was one of those who lamented the retreat of the duke of Brunswick; and he must own, that he thought even a despotism, where life and property were secure, preferable to that state of liberty, where both were every moment liable to be invaded. What he dreaded, should French principles be introduced into this country, was the destruction of the whole order of civil life, not only that we should lose king, lords, and commons, but our property, our wives, every thing that was dear and sacred. Who would wish the morals of the present legislators of France to be introduced into this country? What parent would wish his son to resemble a *Carra*, a *Marat*, a *Danton*, a *Robespierre*? Or, would he wish him to copy the example of a *Petion*? Or should he search the deepest recesses of hell, where could he find a more complete model of depravity than *Monsieur Egalité*? He would affirm, that there was a faction in this country, who wished to submit it to France, in order that our government might be reformed upon the French system. He would likewise affirm, that the French cherished views upon this country; that they encouraged this faction, and were disposed to aid them in their views of overturning our constitution. As a proof of this, he should translate from their own gazette the following account of their proceedings.

The president.—“You decreed, yesterday, that two deputies of Englishmen should be admitted to the bar. I am going to order it to be opened for them.”—The first deputation being admitted, the spokesman addressed the convention as follows:

“Citizens,

"Citizens, legislators! The British and Irish citizens resident at Paris, constantly animated by those principles which have given rise and success to the French revolution, met last Sunday to celebrate the success of your arms, and agreed to present to you their sentiments, and to congratulate you on those events which are so favorable an omen for all people who wish to become free. Receive then that pure and fraternal homage of men who bear in their hearts all the principles of that constitution which you are going to give to your country. Hitherto wars have been only undertaken to gratify the pride and ambition of despots. You have taken up arms only to make reason and liberty triumph. We hope the troops of liberty will not lay them down until there shall be no more tyrants or slaves."—The president answered the deputation as republicans.—He said, "royalty in Europe was in the agonies of death; that the declaration of right, now placed by the side of thrones, was a fire which in the end would consume them; and he even hoped that the time was not far distant when France, England, Scotland, and Ireland—all Europe! all mankind! would form but one peaceful family."—Thereading of this detail he accompanied with many remarks. "These proceedings," he said, "had taken place on the same day in which there had been a discussion in the convention respecting the union of Savoy to France. On that occasion the president had observed, that nature pointed out this union; that France and Savoy were already connected by physical and moral ties. This gentle people, in adding the country of their neighbours to their own dominions, only follow the mild laws of nature; whenever they have a mind to make an acquisition of territory, they discover their claim to it to be established by physical and moral ties: no doubt they will soon find out this physical and moral connection subsisting between them and this country, though we unfortunately have been separated from them by a violent convulsion. Of those persons, who had signed the address from the society for constitutional information, he knew little or nothing excepting

excepting John Frost: he was notorious; his character, he believed, was pretty well known to both sides of the house; the gentlemen of the treasury particularly had reason to be acquainted with it. If Englishmen," he remarked, "had applied to Louis XVI. to reform our government, and had been favorably received by him, would not this have been considered as an aggression by this country? It was indeed, a portent and prodigy that Englishmen should not be able to find liberty at home, and should be obliged to seek it elsewhere. What rendered the factious of this country particularly dangerous, was their connection with the band of French robbers and assassins. The French had declared war against all kings, and of consequence against this country, if it had a king:—The question now was not whether we should make an address to the throne, but whether we should have a throne at all? He concluded with recommending the unanimity so desirable upon this occasion, and with representing the danger which might arise from the progress of the French arms, if not speedily resisted; their power had already become formidable to the whole of Europe, and if we would not have Europe gone from us, it was necessary that we should interpose by the most effectual means to stop their further career."

VI. Mr. Erskine said, "that he felt very great anxiety on the present occasion, as a member of a society for reform, from the general description which had been given of those societies, as associated under specious pretenses of reform, but in reality for very different purposes. He professed himself as much attached to the constitution as any man. From his connection with a great personage, he should be the last to come forward to injure that constitution. The disturbances now so much talked of might be traced back to their origin: none of them had existed at the time the proclamation made its appearance. There had certainly been great remissness on the part of ministers, since no information had been exhibited against that work against which the proclamation had been chiefly directed, till a year and a half after its publication.

tion. No alarm had in fact been excited, till that society with whom he was connected had come forward, for the purpose of a reform in parliament. But what was the ground of danger, since the honorable secretary had himself stated, that not only all the higher and more respectable part of the community, but likewise all the middle class, who composed nine tenths of the whole, were perfectly attached to the constitution, and prepared to defend it from every attack. Several reflections had, in the course of the debate, been thrown out on a work which was the subject of prosecution; the trial would come on in a few days, and he entreated gentlemen not to prejudice the cause. With respect to France, a right honorable gentleman had given a very different representation of the state of that country from what he had done in a work published two years since. That nation, which he had then placed in so contemptible a point of view, and to which he had predicted nothing but calamity and disgrace, he now described as every where extending its conquests, and becoming formidable to the whole of Europe. So far he had seen occasion to alter his sentiments. But if this nation was become so formidable, was this a reason why we should go to war with her, or not rather seek to avert it? Or if the people were that desperate band of robbers and assassins which the right honorable gentleman had represented, were these to be considered as desirable enemies? The right honorable secretary had prayed, 'that God might avert a war.' What did he mean by this expression? The other right honorable gentleman had complained much of attacks made upon the crown; the crown never was attacked, till it had the misfortune to have him for a defender. He would submit to the house whether they would choose to maintain the constitution by coercion? whether they would hold out the idea to the people that they were bound down to adhere to it, as it now existed, or would not rather choose, in addressing them, to adopt the language, 'There's your constitution, handed down to you from your fathers, created by

by their wisdom, preserved by their virtue; it is now yours: it was made by your fathers, it may be unmade by you; upon your love and attachment it depends for its support." He was convinced that it was the wisdom of that house to govern the people by their affections, and instead of loading them with abuse and calumny, to meet their complaints, to redress their grievances, and by granting them a fair representation, remove the ground of their dissatisfaction. He begged that that house might discuss with temper what related to French affairs. If we were on the eve of a war, he certainly could not consider it as good policy to make foreign powers believe that there existed dissention among ourselves. The people were already taxed to a most enormous extent, and should a war be the consequence, when it appeared that every precaution had not been taken to prevent it, they would incur a most heavy responsibility, both to the public and to that house, for having precipitated the nation into so great a calamity." After a debate of many hours, the house divided for the amendment 50 against it 290!

VII. In the house of lords the address was carried without a division, but not without a powerful opposition from the duke of Norfolk, and the lords Lansdowne, Rawdon, and Stanhope. In consequence of the late alarms created by the dreadful apprehension of plots and insurrections, the opposition or whig-party had, as it now appeared, suffered a great and melancholy defection. At the head of the seceders in the upper house, were the prince of Wales, the duke of Portland, lords Fitzwilliam, Spencer, Mansfield, and Loughborough, the last of whom, on the resignation of lord Thurlow, at this period was advanced to the chancellorship. And in the lower house, Mr. Burke, Mr. Windham, sir Gilbert Elliot, Mr. Anstruther, &c. who acquired by this means the popular appellation of ALARMISTS.

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censured the ministers for not having interpolated the mediation of Great Britain, in order to preserve the peace of Europe. Had we protested against the project concerted at Pilnitz, and aimed to prevent the execution of it, England must have acquired such an ascendancy in the councils of France as would have completely obviated all the subsequent causes of dissatisfaction. "It," said Mr. Fox, "there exists a discontented or dissatisfied party in the kingdom, what can so much add to their numbers, or their influence, as a war, which, by increasing the public burthens till they become intolerable will give proportionable weight to their complaints? He wished therefore that war should be avoided, if possible—that negotiation should precede hostility. He was fully aware of the arrogant notions of ministers, who perhaps would not condescend to receive a minister from the French republic. If this were the case, let ministers fairly avow it—that the people of England might know how far the essential interests of the nation were sacrificed to a *punctilio*. Gentlemen should recollect that it was once fashionable to talk of 'a vagrant congress,' of 'one Hancock,' and 'one Adams,' and 'their crew.' But surely the folly of this language had been sufficiently proved." He then moved an amendment, "beseeching his majesty to employ every means of honorable negotiation, for the purpose of preventing a war with France." The motion was opposed by Mr. Burke in a frantic speech, in which he affirmed, "that to send an ambassador to France would be the prelude to the murder of our sovereign." Mr. Pitt was at this time not a member of the house, having vacated his seat by the acceptance of the lucrative sinecure of the Cinque ports, void by the death of the earl of Guilford, once so famous under the title of lord North. In the absence of the minister, Mr. Secretary Dundas entered into a long and elaborate vindication of the measures of administration; and he concluded with a confident prediction, that "if we were forced into a war, it MUST prove SUCCESSFUL and GLORIOUS." The amendment was negatived without a division.

IX. Not

IX. Not discouraged at the ill success of these attempts, Mr. Fox, on the fifteenth of December, moved, at the close of a speech which only served to demonstrate how incompetent are the utmost efforts of human wisdom to work conviction on minds distempered by prejudice and passion, "that a minister be sent to Paris to treat with those persons who exercise provisionally the executive government of France." "This," he said, "implied neither approbation nor disapprobation of the conduct of the existing French government. It was the policy and practice of every nation to treat with the existing government of every other nation with which it had relative interests, without inquiring how that government was constituted, or by what means it acquired possession of power. Was the existing government of Morocco more respectable than that of France? Yet we had more than once sent embassies thither, to men reeking from the blood through which they had waded to their thrones. We had ministers at the German courts at the time of the infamous partition of Poland. We had a minister at Versailles when Corsica was bought and enslaved.—But in none of these instances was any sanction given directly or indirectly by Great Britain to these nefarious transactions.

X. Mr. Francis, in a very excellent speech, remonstrated and protested against the manner in which the debate had been conducted on the part of the ministerialists. "How," said he, "has this awful question been agitated? By appeals to our understanding? No, by exciting our passions, by agitating our feelings, by presenting perpetually to our imagination scenes of horror. Thus do the house in fact deprive themselves of all capacity to debate—of all power to judge. They listen with rapture to invectives, and echo them back in shouts and clamors. Is this a British house of commons? or am I suddenly transplanted by some enchantment into that convention against which the perpetual theme of reproach is, that they deliberate in passion, and resolve by acclamation?"

XI. In

XI. In answer to the absurd and puerile objection, that if we agreed to a negotiation, we should not know with whom to negotiate; Mr. Whitbread asked, with energetic animation, "if we knew with whom we were going to war? If there was no difficulty in deciding upon that point, how could we pretend to be at a loss to know with whom we were to make peace? Doubtless with that assembly, truly described by his majesty as exercising the powers of government in France."

XII. Mr. Courtney animadverted with poignant severity upon the rhapsodical extravagances which had fallen from Mr. Burke; and he read to the house a passage from the famous pamphlet published by him, which, he said, he considered *as the prelude* to the duke of Brunswick's disgraceful manifesto. Mr. Courtney said, "that Mr. Burke was the dupe of his imagination. His imagination was a magic lanthorn, presenting a rapid and endless succession of phantoms.—There were chivalry—the duke of Brunswick—Petion faction—national convention—king of Armenia—Senate of Rome—Marat—assassinations—Corinthian capitals—Tom Paine—and many other things, making a complete raree-show for the entertainment of the admirers of that gentleman." Mr. Courtney acknowledged, "that he never felt so much pleasure as when the Prussians, who had entered France not as soldiers but as ruffians; had been driven back in shame and confusion. He had participated in the triumph when Dumourier made his *joyeuse entrée* into Brabant.

XIII. Mr. Windham had laid it down as an axiom of policy, "that to be *justified* in negotiating with France, it should be a matter of necessity, not of choice." "Happy, dignified opportunity to treat!" exclaimed Mr. Sheridan, "when necessity, a necessity arising from defeat and discomfiture, from shame and disgrace, shall compel us to negotiate on terms which would leave us completely at their mercy! How consolatory, to be able to boast that we are at the same time *justified* and *UNDONE*. But we are told," continued Mr. Sheridan, "that to treat with

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with France would give offence to the allied powers, with whom we are eventually to co-operate." Are we then prepared to make a common cause on the principles and for the purposes for which those despots have associated? Are the freemen of England ready to subscribe to the manifesto of the duke of Brunswick? That detestable outrage on the rights and feelings of humanity! That impotent and wretched tissue of pride, folly, and cruelty, which had steeled the heart and maddened the brain of all France! The question is not merely whether we shall go to war or not? but on what principle should it be conducted, and to what end directed? To restore the ancient despotism of France? Impossible! Disputes and causes of complaint existing, how were they to be terminated but by some sort of negotiation? But we were told that the dignity of the nation forbade a public and avowed communication with the present ruling powers in France. Was the dignity of the nation better consulted by the mean subterfuge of an indirect and underhand intercourse? Was it sacrificed by a magnanimous frankness, and sustained only by dark and insidious disguise? Far from recalling the ambassador of England from Paris at the late perilous crisis, a *statesman-like administration* would have regarded the post of minister at Paris as the situation which demanded the first and ablest talents of the country. It was a situation which afforded scope and interest for the noblest mind that ever warmed a human bosom. The French had been uniformly partial, and even prejudiced in favor of the English. What manly sense and generous feeling, and above all, what fair truth and plain dealing might have effected, it was difficult to calculate. But the policy which discarded these, and which substituted in their stead a HOLLOW NEUTRALITY, was an error fatal in its consequences, and for ever to be lamented." The motion was in the end negatived without a division.

XIV. The desertion of the *friends* of opposition, far from dispiriting the faithful few that remained, seemed to

to animate them to still higher and more ardent exertions of patriotic zeal. The popular odium incurred at this time by the leaders of opposition, particularly by Mr. Fox, in consequence of their generous endeavours to rescue their country from the gulph of ruin into which it was with such blind and rash precipitancy about to plunge, will appear to posterity scarcely credible. Neither professing a contempt for the public judgment, nor on the other hand yielding for a moment to the tide of popular opinion, Mr. Fox published at this period a very animated and dignified address to his constituents, the electors of Westminster; stating, with admirable force and perspicuity of argument, his reasons for his late parliamentary conduct. The conclusion of this justly celebrated address is peculiarly striking. "Let us not," says he, "attempt to deceive ourselves. Whatever possibility, or even probability there may be of a counter-revolution from internal agitation and discord, the means of producing such an event by external force can be no other than the conquest of France.—The CONQUEST OF FRANCE! O calumniated crusaders, how rational and moderate were your objects! O much injured Louis XIV. upon what slight grounds have you been accused of restless and immoderate ambition! O tame and feeble Cervantes, with what a timid pencil and faint colours have you painted the portrait of a disordered imagination!"

XV. Although the determination of the British court was from the first sufficiently manifest, the government of France left no means untried to accomplish an accommodation. On the seventeenth of December, a memorial was presented by M. Chauvelin to lord Grenville, in which he informs his lordship that the executive council of the French republic, thinking it a duty which they owe to the French nation, not to leave it in the state of suspense into which it has been thrown by the late measures of the British government, have authorized him to demand with openness, whether France ought to consider England as a neutral or hostile power; at the same

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same time being solicitous, that not the smallest doubt should exist respecting the disposition of France towards England, and of its desire to remain in peace. In allusion to the decree of the nineteenth of November, M. Chauvelin says, "that the French nation absolutely reject that false interpretation, by which it might be supposed that the French republic should favor insurrections, or excite disturbance in any neutral or friendly country whatever. In particular, they declare in the most solemn manner, that France will not attack Holland so long as that power adheres to the principles of her neutrality." As to the navigation of the Scheld, M. Chauvelin affirms it to be a question of too little importance to be made the sole cause of a war; and that it could only be used as a pretext for a premeditated aggression. On this fatal supposition," he says, "the French nation will accept war: but *such* a war would be the war not of the British nation, but of the British ministry against the French republic; and of this he conjures them well to consider the *terrible responsibility*."

XVI. To this communication lord Grenville returned a most arrogant and provoking answer. His lordship acknowledged the receipt of a *note* from M. Chauvelin, *stiling himself* minister plenipotentiary of France. He reminds him that the king, since the unhappy events of the tenth of August, had suspended all *official* communication with France; and informs him, that he cannot be treated with in the quality and under the form stated in his *note*. Nevertheless, "under a form neither regular nor official," his lordship condescends to reply, but in a mode which could only tend to inflame the differences subsisting between the two nations, and which, far from accepting the concessions and explanations made by France, sought only to discover new pretences of cavil and quarrel. In a tone of the most decided and lofty superiority, his lordship says, "if France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement; and to *confine herself within*

within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights." The relinquishment of her recent conquests being thus haughtily demanded of France as a preliminary of peace, it might be well supposed that negotiation was at an end. But the government of France, in the midst of their triumphs, discovered a degree of temper and moderation in their intercourse with England as surprising as it was laudable.

1793. XVII. In answer to the letter of lord Grenville, a memorial was transmitted from M. le Brun, minister of foreign affairs, in the name of the executive council, dated January the fourth 1793, framed in terms of singular wisdom and ability, and forming a striking contrast to the pride, petulance, and folly displayed in the communication of the English minister. They begin with repeating "the assurances of their sincere desire to maintain peace and harmony between France and England. It is with great reluctance," say they, "that the republic would see itself forced to a rupture much more contrary to its inclination than its interest." In reference to lord Grenville's refusal to acknowledge M. Chauvelin in his diplomatic capacity, the council remark, "that in the negotiations now carrying on at Madrid, the principal minister of his Catholic majesty did not hesitate to address M. Bourgoign, the ambassador of the republic at that court, by the title of minister plenipotentiary of France. But that a defect in point of form might not impede a negotiation, on the success of which depended the tranquillity of two great nations, they had sent credential letters to M. Chauvelin, to enable him to treat according to the severity of diplomatic forms. The council repeat, that the decree of the nineteenth of November had been misunderstood, and that it was far from being intended to favor sedition, being merely applicable to the single case where the general will of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should call for the assistance and fraternity of the French nation. Sedition can never exist in the expression of the general will."

will. The Dutch were certainly not seditious when they formed the generous resolution of throwing off the Spanish yoke; nor was it accounted as a crime to Henry IV. or to queen Elizabeth, that they listened to their solicitations of assistance. As to the right of navigation on the Scheld, the council affirm, that it is a question of absolute indifference to England, little interesting even to Holland, but of great importance to the Belgians, who were not parties to the treaty of Westphalia, by which they were divested of that right; but when that nation shall find itself in full possession of its liberty, and from any motive whatever shall consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheld, France will not oppose it. With respect to the charge of aggrandizement, France, they say, has renounced and still renounces all conquest; and its occupying the Netherlands will continue no longer than the war.—If these explanations appear insufficient, after having done every thing in our power to maintain peace, we will prepare for war. We shall combat with regret the English, whom we esteem, but we shall combat them without fear."

XVIII. The reply of lord Grenville to this memorial was couched in terms still more extraordinary and imitating than the first. His lordship declares, "that he finds nothing satisfactory in the result of it. Instead of reparation and retraction, his lordship complains, that nothing more is offered than an *illusory negotiation*,"—as if England had a right to expect that France would give up every point in dispute previous to any negotiation; or as if the offer of evacuating the Netherlands at the termination of the war, and of leaving the Belgians to settle the question relative to the Scheld, together with the positive disavowal of the offensive meaning ascribed to the decree of November the nineteenth, did not form a proper and sufficient basis of negotiation. In fact, by these great concessions, every rational object of negotiation was accomplished; nevertheless, lord Grenville goes on to say, "that these explanations are not considered sufficient, and that all the *motives* which gave rise to the preparation

preparations *still continue*. If however, under this *extra official* form you have any farther explanations to offer," says his lordship, "I shall willingly attend to them. In a separate note his lordship informs M. Chauvelin, that his majesty is not *disposed* to receive his new letters of credence from the French republic. M. Chauvelin then requested a personal interview with his lordship, which was also refused.

XIX. At length this extraordinary business, the source of unnumbered calamities to this country, was brought to a crisis, by a letter from lord Grenville, dated January the twenty fourth, 1793, in which his lordship says, "I am charged to notify to you, sir, that the character with which you had been invested at this court, and the functions of which have been so long suspended, being now entirely terminated by the fatal death of his most christian majesty, you have no longer any public character here; and his majesty has thought fit to order that you should retire from this kingdom within the term of eight days." At this very time M. Maret, a confidential agent of M. Le Brun, was on his way to England with fresh dispatches from the executive council, and as there is good reason to believe fresh concessions of the highest importance. But on his arrival in London, being informed of the compulsive dismissal of M. Chauvelin, he did not think himself authorized to open his commission. He therefore merely announced his arrival to lord Grenville, but no advances were made to him on the part of the English.

XX. The death of the French monarch was indeed a disastrous and mournful event. It was well known that the executive council, and a great majority of the national convention, were eagerly desirous to avert this fatal catastrophe; but the violence of the Jacobin faction, and the savage rage of the populace, rendered it impossible. "We may," said M. le Brun to a confidential friend, "sacrifice ourselves, without being able to save the life of the king." It was not that the moderate party entertained any doubt of the veracity of the lead-

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ing charges brought against the king; for, on this point, there was never any difference of opinion in France; but they discerned innumerable circumstances of palliation, which formed an irresistible claim to compassion and mercy. In England no one attempted to justify the deed; "nor," says an animated writer of that time, "is it the season for *extenuation* now that the stream of prejudice flows strong, and the phantasm of a murdered king stalks before our affrighted imagination."

XXI. On Monday the 28th of January, four days after M. Chauvelin had been ordered to leave the kingdom, the king sent a message to the house, importing, that, "his majesty had given directions for laying before the house of commons, copies of several papers which have been received from M. Chauvelin, late minister plenipotentiary from the most christian king, by his majesty's secretary of state for foreign affairs, and of the answers returned thereto; and likewise a copy of an order made by his majesty in council, and transmitted by his majesty's command to the said M. Chauvelin, in consequence of the accounts of the atrocious act, recently perpetrated at Paris. In the present situation of affairs, his majesty thinks it indispensibly necessary to make a further augmentation of his forces by sea and land; and he relies on the known affection and zeal of the house of commons to enable his majesty to take the most effectual measures, in the present important conjuncture, for maintaining the security and rights of his own dominions, for supporting his allies, and for opposing views of aggrandizement and ambition on the part of France, which would be at all times dangerous to the general interests of Europe, but are peculiarly so when connected with the propagation of principles which lead to the violation of the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace and order of all civil society."

XXII. On the first of February, his majesty's message was taken into consideration, when an animated and interesting debate arose, the result of which precluded every hope of amicable accommodation between England and

France. It was opened by Mr. Pitt, who began by saying, "that amidst the many important objects arising from the message of his majesty, which now came to be considered, there was one which particularly called for their attention. That attention, indeed, could not fail to be separately directed to that calamitous event, that act of outrage to every principle of religion, justice, and humanity; an act which in this country, and the whole of Europe, had excited but one general sentiment of indignation and abhorrence, and could not fail to excite the same sentiments in every civilized nation. He should, indeed, better consult his own feelings and those of the house could he draw a veil over this melancholy event. It was in all its circumstances so full of grief and horror, that it must be a wish, in which all united, to tear it, if possible, from their memories, to expunge it from the page of history, and remove it for ever from the observation or comments of mankind.

*Excidat ille dies ævo, neu postera credant
Secula? nos certe taceamus, et obruta multa
Nocte tegi nostræ patiamur crimina gentis.*

Such," he continued, "were the words applied by an author of their own, to an occasion (the massacre of St. Bartholemew) which had always been deemed the standing reproach of the French nation, and the horrors and cruelties of which had only been equalled by those atrocious and sanguinary proceedings which had been witnessed in some late instances. But whatever might be their feelings of indignation and abhorrence with respect to that dreadful and inhuman event to which he had set out with calling their attention, that event now was past; it was impossible that the present age should not now be contaminated with the guilt and ignominy of having witnessed it, or that the breath of tradition should be prevented from handing it down to posterity. They could only now enter their solemn protestation against that event, as contrary to every sentiment of justice and humanity, as violating the most sacred authority of laws, and the strongest principles of natural feeling. Hence, however they

they might derive an useful theme of reflection—a lesson of salutary warning: For, in this dreadful transaction, they saw concentrated the effect of those principles pushed to their utmost extent, which set out with dissolving all the bonds of legislation by which society were held together, which were established in opposition to every law, divine and human, and presumptuously relying on the authority of wild and delusive theories, rejected all the advantages of the wisdom and experience of former ages, and even the sacred instructions of revelation.—While therefore he directed their attention to this transaction, he paid not only a tribute to humanity, but he suggested to them a subject of much useful reflection: for, by considering the consequences of these principles, they might be duly warned of their mischievous tendency, and taught to guard against their progress. Indeed he wished that this subject might on the present occasion be considered rather as matter of reason and reflection, than of sentiment. Sentiment was now unavailing; but reason and reflection might be attended with the most beneficial effects; and while they pointed out the horrid evils which had disgraced and ruined another country, might preserve our own from exhibiting a scene of similar calamity and guilt. No consideration indeed could be more connected with a country like this, or of greater importance, than what tended to avert such transactions as had taken place in that neighbouring state. Here, where a monarch formed an essential part of the government, clothed with that inviolability which was essential to the exercise of the sovereign power; where the legislature was composed of a mixture of democracy and aristocracy; and where, by the benefits of this system, we had been exempted from those mischiefs which in former ages had been produced by despotism, and which were only to be exceeded by those still more horrid evils which in the present time had been found to be the fruits of licentiousness and anarchy. The situation of this country, he must, indeed, compare to the temperate zone, which was the situation in every respect best

fitted for health and enjoyment; and, where enjoying a mild, beneficial, regulated influence, the inhabitants were equally protected from the scorching heats of the torrid, and the rigorous frosts of the frigid zones. Compared with this country, where equal protection was extended to all, and there existed so high a sum of national felicity, dreadful indeed was the contrast afforded in the present situation of France, where there prevailed a system of the utmost licentiousness and disorder, and anarchy through a thousand organs operated to produce unnumbered mischiefs. Such a system could surely never find its way into this happy country, unless industriously imported; and to guard against the introduction of such a system was their first duty and their most important care. He now proceeded to state that the situation of France had already been much the subject of discussion in that house, particularly at the opening of the session. Many comments, which from his absence he had not an opportunity of hearing, had been made on the conduct of the French, as even then affording much ground for jealousy and precaution. But if such was the alarm which had been taken up from his majesty's speech at the opening of the session, what were now the circumstances on which his majesty's message had come down to the house? Mr. Pitt now proceeded to remark on the different papers, which had been laid on the table, and printed for the use of the members. "He trusted," he said, "that they were sufficiently acquainted with the contents of those papers, as to be able to follow him in the references which he should have occasion to make. It would appear from the first paper that the system on which his majesty had uniformly acted, was founded on the very principles which had afterwards dictated the necessity of his making preparations. His majesty had declined taking any part in the internal government of France, and had made a positive declaration to that effect. When he took that wise, generous, and disinterested resolution, he had reason to expect that the French would in return have respected the rights of himself and his allies, and

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most of all, that they would not have attempted any internal interference in this country. A paper on the table contained on their part a positive contract to abstain from any of those acts by which they had provoked the indignation of this country. In this paper they disclaimed all views of aggrandizement; they gave assurances of their good conduct to neutral nations; they protested against their entertaining an idea of interfering in the government of the country or making any attempts to excite insurrection, upon the express ground that such interference and such attempts would be a violation of the law of nations. They had themselves, by anticipation, passed sentence upon their own conduct; and the event of this evening's discussion would decide, whether that sentence would be confirmed by those who had actually been injured. During the whole summer, while France had been engaged in the war with Austria and Prussia, his majesty had in no shape departed from the neutrality which he had engaged to observe, nor did he, by the smallest act, give any reason to suspect his adherence to that system. But what, he would ask, was the conduct of the French? Had they also faithfully observed their part of the agreement, and adhered to the assurances which, on the ground of his majesty's neutrality, they had given, to reject all views of aggrandizement, not to interfere with neutral nations, and to respect the rights of his majesty and his allies? What had been their conduct would very soon appear from the statement of facts. They had immediately shewed how little sincere they were in their first assurances, by discovering intentions to pursue a system of the most unlimited aggrandizement, if they were not opposed and checked in their career. The first instance of their success in Savoy had been sufficient to unfold the plan of their ambition. They had immediately adopted the course to annex it for ever to their own dominions, and had displayed a resolution to do the same, wherever they should carry their arms. That they might not leave any doubt

of their intentions, by a formal decree they had stated their plan of overturning every government, and substituting their own; they threatened destruction to all who should not be inclined to adopt their system of freedom, and, by a horrid mockery, offered fraternization, where, if it was refused, they were determined to employ force, and to propagate their principles, where they should fail to gain assent, by the mouths of cannon. They established, in the instructions to the commissioners whom they appointed to enforce the decree with respect to the countries entered by their armies, a standing revolutionary order; they instituted a system of organizing disorganization. And what was the reason they assigned for all this? 'The period of freedom,' said they, 'must soon come: we must then endeavour, by all means in our power, to accomplish it now, for should this freedom be accomplished by other nations, what then will become of us? Shall we then be safe?' It is a question indeed which they might well put, 'What will become of us?' for justly might they entertain doubts of their safety. They had rendered the Netherlands a province, in substance as well as name, entirely dependent upon France. That system, pursued by the Jacobin societies, in concert with their correspondents, had given a more fatal blow to liberty than any which it had ever suffered from the boldest attempts of the most aspiring monarch. What had been the circumstances which had attended the triumphal entry of General Dumourier? Demonstrations of joy inspired by terror, illuminations imperiously demanded by an armed force. And when the primary assembly met to deliberate, in what circumstances did they assemble? With the tree of liberty planted amidst them, and surrounded by a hollow square of French soldiers, a situation surely equally conducive to the ease of their own thoughts, and the freedom of their public deliberations. And what had happened even since the French had professed their intention of evacuating the territories which they had entered at the conclusion of the war? A deputation had been received from Hainault, requesting that it might be added

as an eighty fifth department. And how had this deputation been received? Had the request been rejected? No, it had only been postponed till a committee should be able to prepare instructions, how those nations, who should be desirous of the same union, should be able to incorporate themselves with France in a regular and formal manner, till the preliminaries should be settled by which it should subject to its government, and add to its territories, every country which should be so unfortunate as to experience the force of its arms, and give to its wild and destructive ambition, only the same limits with those of its power. It was matter of serious consideration, how far such a conduct not only ought to rouse the indignation, but might tend to affect the interests of this country. To shew how the French had behaved with respect to neutral nations, he need only refer to their decree of the nineteenth of November, which had already been so often mentioned and so amply discussed. He should read an extract from this decree. He then read that passage in which the French grant fraternity to all those people who should be desirous to gain their freedom, and offer them assistance for that purpose. And that none might be at a loss to know to whom the French nation were disposed to grant this relationship of younger brothers, they had ordered the decree to be printed in all languages, by which it might be perceived that they intended the favor to all nations who chose to accept of it. Some pretended explanations had indeed been given of this decree, but of all these explanations he should say nothing but what had already been stated by the noble secretary of state, that they contained only an avowal and a repetition of the offence. The whole of their language, institutions, and conduct, had been directed to the total subversion of every government. To monarchy particularly they had testified the most decided aversion, and so violent was their enmity, that they could be satisfied with nothing less than its entire extermination. The bloody sentence, which the hand of the assassin had lately carried into execution against their own monarch

monarch, was passed against the sovereigns of all countries. Were not these principles intended to be applied in their effects to this government? No society in this country, however small in number, however contemptible, however even questionable in existence, had sent addresses to their assembly, in which they had expressed sentiments of sedition and treason, which had not been received with a degree even of theatrical extravagance, and cherished with all the enthusiasm of congenial feeling. Need he then ask if England was not aimed at in this conduct, and if it alone was to be exempted from the consequences of a system, the profession of which was anarchy, and which seemed to aspire to establish universal dominion upon the ruin of every government? On the subject of the violation of the rights of his majesty and his allies, he had already on a former occasion spoken at some length. He had stated, that the only claim which the French could have to interfere in the navigation of the Scheld, must either be in the assumed character of sovereign of the Low Countries, or as taking to themselves the office of the arbiters of Europe. There were the most solemn engagements of treaties to protect the Dutch in their exclusive right of navigating the Scheld. An infringement of treaties more notorious and more flagrant perhaps never had occurred, than that which now appeared in the instance of their conduct with respect to the Scheld. For this infringement they had advanced some pretences, alledging that the exclusive privilege of navigating the Scheld was contrary to certain principles with respect to the rights of rivers. Capricious and wild in their theory, and in entire contradiction to whatever had been sanctioned by established practice, they likewise pretend, that the treaty, on which was founded the exclusive right of navigating the Scheld, was antiquated and obsolete, and had become no longer binding, though they had themselves, upon receiving the assurances of his majesty's intentions of neutrality, pledged themselves to an observance of all the subsisting treaties. The pretences which they alledged upon this occasion were indeed

deed such as equally went to weaken the force of every treaty, to remove every obligation, and destroy all confidence between nations. From what had passed in a former part of the evening, he understood that it would be urged, that the Dutch had made no formal requisition for the support of this country, in order to resist the opening of the Scheld by the French, and to enable them to maintain their right to the exclusive navigation of that river. He granted that no such formal requisition had been made. But might there not be prudential reasons for not making this requisition on their part, very different from those which should induce this country to withhold its support? When the French opened the Scheld, the Dutch entered their solemn protest against that invasion of their rights, which left them at liberty, at any time, to take it up as an act of hostility. If, from the sudden progress of the French arms, and the circumstances of their forces being at their very door, they either from prudence or fear did not think proper to take it up as an immediate commencement of hostilities; because they had been timid, would England think itself entitled to leave its allies, already involved in a situation of imminent danger, to that certain ruin to which they were exposed, in consequence of a system, the principles of which threatened also destruction to England, to Europe, and to the whole of mankind? Thus in all those three assurances which they had given of their intention to reject any system of aggrandizement, to abstain from interfering in the government of any neutral country, and to respect the rights of his majesty and of his allies, they had entirely failed, and in every respect completely reversed that line of conduct which they had so solemnly pledged themselves to adopt. Whatever they had offered under the name of explanations contained nothing that either afforded any compensation for the past, or was at all satisfactory with respect to the future. They had stated, that they would evacuate the Netherlands at the conclusion of the war—upon a promise so illusory there could not be the smallest grounds of dependance. With respect to the decree of
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the nineteenth of November, they had made no apology for the manner in which they had received seditious addresses from this country. They stated indeed, that it was injurious to them to suppose that they would interfere in any government without a previous express declaration of the national will: but they had left themselves to judge what was sufficient to constitute that declaration of the national will, and thus allowed this decree, which in fact was nothing else than an advertisement for sedition in every country to remain in full force; and what in their opinion was to constitute a declaration of the national will we could only judge of from the manner in which they had received seditious addresses from a majority in this country so small, that those who were disposed to put the conduct of the French in the most favourable point of view, held them out as too contemptible for notice: these addresses they received as expressive of the sentiments of the people of Great Britain, the great majority of whom he was, however, happy to say detested their principles—principles which, if once adopted, would involve in them the ruin of our happy constitution, and the destruction of our country, and introduce anarchy and all those scenes of horror with which the country which had broached them was now afflicted: but the patience of the house and his strength would fail him should he proceed to state all the facts connected with the propositions which he now meant to lay before them. On the twenty-seventh of December M. Chauvelin, on the part of the executive council, had presented the note complaining of the injurious construction of the decree of the nineteenth of November. On the thirty first of December a member of that executive council (minister of the marine) addressed a letter to all the friends of liberty in the sea-ports; from which he would now read some passages. ‘The government of England is arming and the king of Spain, encouraged by this, is preparing to attack us. These two tyrannical powers, after persecuting the patriots on their own territories, think, without doubt, that they shall be able to influence the judgment

to be pronounced on the tyrant Louis. They hope to frighten us: but no—a people who have made themselves free—a people who have driven out of the bosom of France, and as far as the distant borders of the Rhine, the terrible army of the Prussians and Austrians—the people of France will not suffer laws to be dictated to them by a tyrant. The king and his parliament mean to make war against us. Will the English republicans suffer it? Already these free men shew their discontent, and the repugnance which they have to bear arms against their brothers the French—Well! we will fly to their succour!—we will make a descent on the island—we will lodge there fifty thousand caps of liberty—we will plant there the sacred tree, and we will stretch out our arms to our republican brethren—the tyranny of their government will soon be destroyed.’ He called the attention of the house to this declaration, which distinguished the English people from the king and the parliament, and to the nature of that present which was meant to be made them. While such declarations were made, what could be thought of any explanations which were pretended to be given, or what credit was due to the assertions, that they entertained no intentions hostile to the government of this country? From all these circumstances he concluded, that the conduct and pretensions of the French were such as were neither consistent with the existence or safety of this country, such as that house could not, and he was confident, never would, acquiesce in. Their explanations had only been renewed insults, and instead of reverting to those assurances with which they had originally set out, they now shewed themselves determined to maintain the ground, such as it was, upon which they stood with respect to this country. In the last paper which had been delivered, they had given in an ultimatum, stating that, unless you accept such satisfaction as they have thought proper to give, they will prepare for war. Unless you then recede from your principles, or they withdraw it, a war must be the consequence—as to the time, the precise moment, he should not pretend to fix

fix it—it would be left open to the last for any satisfactory explanation, but he should deceive them if he should say that he thought any such explanation would be given, or that it was probable that a war could be avoided: rather than recede from our principles, war was preferable to a peace, which could neither be consistent with the internal tranquillity nor external safety of this country." He then moved an address of thanks to his majesty.

XXIII. Lord Beauchamp seconded the motion. He said, "in the address of thanks now about to be voted, the interests not only of the present generation, but of posterity, were deeply involved. It therefore became him, and every good man, to support government.—When he considered the subject of discussion in a cool and deliberate manner, he could not conceive what this country had done to incur the menaces and indignation of France. He could not discover one single instance of outrage or injury against France. The only fault, perhaps, which we had committed was, the state of neutrality which we had observed since the commencement of her unhappy distractions. Had we interfered sooner, and endeavoured to resist her career of madness, we might very likely have saved France from many of the misfortunes which she had afterwards suffered. If, by the extraordinary intemperance of the French, their great fabric of human wisdom, the rights of man, had soon been dissipated or dissolved, was England accessory to its demolition? No, it was impossible to mention one single act which, on our part, could be construed into an acceleration of its downfall. Their ambition was insatiable, and unexampled in the history of the world.—They penetrated into Savoy for the avowed purpose of freedom; but renouncing that declaration, they were not contented till that country was, by intrigue, added to the eighty-fourth department. Thus, while they pretended to diffuse principles of liberty, they enforced those of conquest, and robbed the people, whom they pretended to aid, of the small remains of their natural freedom."

freedom. In Brabant the same principles were distinguishable; and thus we were driven to the awful alternative of waging a war against a people boundless in their ambition. Lord Grenville, in an answer to M. Chauvelin, very properly says, 'you are not ignorant, that, since the unhappy tenth of August, the king has thought proper to suspend all communications with France.' This declaration ought to have served as a denial of the reigning powers of France; and the French faction, who had degraded royalty, might have very easily conceived that the intentions of the king of England were inimical to all agitators and anarchists, and that, if provoked, he would exert the power given him by the constitution to repel the insolence or ambition of men dangerous to the good government of society. Lord Grenville has been weakly accused of absurdly acknowledging and disavowing M. Chauvelin in his official capacity, while at the same time he enters into a discussion with him concerning the interests of the two countries. This argument might, at first, appear founded; but, on examination of it, would be evident, that, although lord Grenville refuses all communication with him in his official capacity, yet, that he might take the opportunity of expressing his sentiments as a simple individual; lord Grenville certainly meant no more, although his answer was afterwards presented to the world as a state paper of authority from the court of St. James's. In corroboration of this opinion, let gentlemen examine lord Grenville's own words—'I have been unwilling to convey to you the notification stated above, without, at the same time, explaining myself clearly and distinctly on the subject of what you communicated to me, although under a form which is neither regular nor official.' If ever the time should arrive when it may be expedient to receive a minister from the present executive council of France, the measure was not prevented by the declaration of lord Grenville, who expressly mentioned, that the proposition of receiving a minister accredited by any other authority or power in France would be a

new question, which, whenever it occurred, the king would have the right to decide according to the interests of his subjects, his own dignity, and the regard which he owes to his allies, and to the general system of Europe.' Thus the decision of the question was given to the proper authority, because his majesty, in the cases of ambassadors either to or from foreign courts, had an undoubted right to sanction or reject, according to the temporary emergency. If it be evident that the system of the executive council of France, supported by the convention, is to encourage disorder and revolt in other countries, how can England remain neutral? The most superficial observer may easily conceive, that after France has distracted and overturned other governments, her inordinate ambition will induce her to make similar attempts against the rights and liberties of England. The grand system of French policy now adopted is the fomenting of discord and sedition in other countries.— Having hostile intentions against Holland, she is making every effort to seduce the Dutch from their allegiance to the stadtholder, and, if suffered, may soon throw that country into a state of anarchy and confusion, overturn the ancient government, and introduce the new-system so dangerous to society, and so destructive of real liberty and property. If seriously considered, the union of Corsica with France in the new doctrines might have been urged as a sufficient reason for the commencement of hostilities, because such a junction was dangerous to the balance of power. He lamented as much as any man the calamities of war, and perhaps ought not to have censured Mr. Pitt for his resistance of the measure till the present urgency. Had he attempted the expedient sooner, the public would, in all probability, not have suffered it. The minister of a free country was differently situated from the servant of an absolute prince. He must wait with patience for the will of the people. That time was now arrived when every good man was of opinion that our interference was necessary for the safety of Europe. Some praised the success which the

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French had obtained by the victory of Jemappe. For his part, he was more parsimonious in his panegyric of that event, because from it he dated many of the calamities which followed. The battle of Jemappe had done more to the aggrandizement of France, by giving it the possession of Brabant, than any other event. What had Dumourier's entry into Brabant produced? Not that generous spirit of liberty so much vaunted by the French before they took possession of the territories: but the *joyeuse entrée* was succeeded by the bonfire, in which was burnt the magna charta of the country; after which followed the sacrifice of the ancient liberties of the natives. Dumourier no sooner obtained an influence over the credulity of the people of Brabant, than he levied from them five or six millions sterling, by which he calculated that his army of one hundred and twenty thousand men might be supported nine or tenth months longer. Brabant, till the *joyeuse entrée* of Dumourier, had always enjoyed such a considerable portion of liberty as to be deemed a free country. The time was, when the smallest acquisition of territory gained by the French nation would have thrown England into a ferment.—When the duke of Choiseul, in the zenith of his power, seized upon Avignon, insignificant as was the acquisition, it threw Europe into a flame, which would have burst out into a war, if the duke had not prevented it by restoring that city to the pope, its lawful sovereign." His lordship said, "he remembered very well what were the opinions of the leading men in parliament at the time when the French undertook to make a conquest of the island of Corsica, many of them were persuaded, that, to prevent such a measure, it was the interest of England to arm, and run all the hazard of a war. By annexing Savoy to this empire, the French shewed that aggrandizement was their object. This conduct in the Netherlands equally shewed that they intended to rule these provinces as their own: the consequences to England of the Flemish ports being in the hands of France, must, to the most ordinary statesman, appear to be to

the last degree alarming. It was now two hundred and fifty years since Philip de Comines, writing upon the subject of the fall of the house of Bourbon in the time of Louis XI. and the transfer of the ports of Boulogne, &c. to France, observed that this transfer ought to alarm England, and that unless the consequences were timely prevented, they must prove fatal to the liberties and independence of that kingdom, and of all Europe. If gentlemen would look at the map of Brabant, they would see that the port of Antwerp on the Scheld, lying opposite our coast, and almost in a direct line with the river Thames, would, in the hands of the French, prove destructive to the British trade, and deprive England of the dominion of the narrow seas. It would do more, for Brabant, situated as it was respecting Holland, would, in the hands of the French, enable them to rule that republic at their pleasure, or pull it down if they pleased, or govern it under its present form by means of their ambassadors at the Hague, who would leave the Dutch only the shadow of liberty and independence.— Queen Elizabeth opposed sometimes France, sometimes Spain; but her soundest policy was raising up a new power, the republic of Holland, which might be a check upon either, and a barrier to England against both: this was truly sound policy, and it would be shewing a total disregard for our own interest if we were to leave that state exposed to the danger of being swallowed up by France. Holland and England were natural allies: it was true they had sometimes quarrelled, but they had seen their error, and ought to unite in jealousy and detestation of the people who had made them enemies.— Before he should sit down,” his lordship said, “ there were two points on which he would take the liberty of saying a few words: one was the recall of lord Gower, the other the dismissal of M. Chauvelin; both of which measures had his hearty approbation. Before the noble lord was recalled the government of France was at an end; her constitution, which had been called a model of free government, was dissolved in a few days, and there

there was no saying when it would be replaced by another. During the interval it would not have been decent for a British ambassador to remain at Paris, particularly as the ministers of the other powers had withdrawn from that city. As to M. Chauvelin, he must say it looked rather suspicious that so punctilious a nation as France should leave an ambassador here after ours had been recalled: he believed it was generally understood that ambassadors were at best but privileged or honorable spies; and he was inclined to think, that, only for the purpose of having a spy upon our public conduct, and an agent that might forward their seditious views, the executive council kept M. Chauvelin here: for his part he was very glad that he was gone, and he wished that he had been ordered away sooner, for there were occasions in which resident ambassadors might do great mischief. In the year 1712, when it was known that England was going to make a separate peace, the then Imperial ambassador at our court delivered in a strong memorial to our minister, and caused it to be printed the next day in the newspapers; for which he was ordered to quit the court and kingdom. The removal of ambassadors did not necessarily prevent negotiation; for the diplomatic act had devised means for enabling two nations, though actually at war, to treat through the medium of a neutral power: when a war was declared, the belligerent nations recalled their ministers; but did it follow that the war was therefore to be eternal? War was certainly a calamity, but not so great a one as a hollow peace. Whether it broke out a little sooner or a little later was of little consequence, if it broke out at all. In the present instance we might expect a *speedy* and a *happy* termination of it; for all Europe would be on our side. He was aware that confederacies did not always act well together; but the reason was obvious, the parties composing it rarely had a common interest, or would hold out till the general interest required a general peace. In the present contest the case was different; the emperor would, no doubt, strain every nerve to recover

his beautiful provinces in the Netherlands; the king of Prussia would feel it necessary to recover the reputation which was the main prop of the Prussian monarchy; Holland would have to contend for her very existence: Italy was interested in taking from France Savoy, and restoring it to the king of Sardinia; and Spain and Portugal must see the danger to their governments, if the French arms and French principles were not timely checked. In such a state of affairs England had every reason to look for a general, a powerful, and a cordial co-operation of the greatest part of Europe against France. For these reasons," he said, "he was determined to give his most hearty support to the address moved by the right honorable gentleman."

XXIV. Earl Wycombe said, "that he conceived it to be his most indispensable duty to use every argument in his power to avert from his country so grievous a calamity as that of entering into a war; a calamity of such a nature, as to leave only a doubt as to the extent of ills which might probably result from it; and he conjured the house not to agree to the proposed address till they had well considered the consequence. This country, his lordship said, was in no danger whatever, being equally secured by its insular situation, its internal resources, and the strong attachment of the people to the constitution; he conceived, therefore, that we had no ground for alarm on the first point mentioned in the message from his majesty. As to the second point, the security of our allies, his lordship said, it was impossible we could be told that Prussia had been attacked by France, and of course this part of the message must relate to Holland. If the navigation of the Scheld was the subject of dispute, it appeared to be a matter of indifference to this country; except that in one view it would be of great advantage to our commerce and manufactures, by opening a new channel in the best and most convenient situation for sending our manufactures into all the continent of Europe. From several circumstances it would be idle and impolitic in the Dutch themselves

to meditate war, and they seem by no means disposed to do so: shall we then urge them to resistance, and menace France with war? With regard to the new point in his majesty's message, the propagation of French principles, he thought it by no means safe to go to war against principles. If the principles alluded to were levelling principles, they should be met with contempt; but he by no means reprobated all the French principles.—Great stress had been laid on the cruelties perpetrated in France; but he could not think they were a proper cause of war: in his opinion, these cruelties had all originated in the famous expedition of the duke of Brunswick, which might be called a fraternity of kings for the purpose of imposing despotism on all Europe. Another ground taken by ministers, he said, was the necessity of preserving the balance of power in Europe—or, the system of Europe: but he could not see why this country should be ready, upon all occasions, to go to war for the benefit of other nations. This system he looked upon to be no more than a political fiction, a cover for any interference that caprice might dictate. The next thing to which he wished to call the attention of the house was the means of carrying on the war. When the present supposed accumulation, of which ministers boasted, was exhausted, they must have recourse to new taxes; and if there was no absolute necessity for war, why burthen the people to maintain a war, of the issue of which no judgment could be formed, and the relative situation of France to this country was such, that the connection of this country with her should not, he thought, be put to unnecessary hazard. The war might be carried on for some time without any additional duties; but when our resources were exhausted, taxes must follow, accompanied by the murmurs, if not execrations, of the people; and he hoped we would not fall into an error with respect to the finances of France, for it had undoubtedly resources which would be sufficient at least for some time. The death of the king of France had been pathetically lamented by ministers, but they never attempted

attempted to interfere, and while they professed peace, used every haughty irritating provocation to war. Upon the whole, he could view the war in no other light than as a revival of the system of extirpation that was the basis of the late American war. He should therefore give his negative to the motion for the address."

XXV. Mr. Whitbread, junr. said, "he should preface the few observations he thought it proper to submit to the consideration of the house, by declaring his abhorrence of the atrocious deed lately committed in France: it would stand one of the foremost in the black catalogue of crimes which history had to record; it would remain a foul stain upon the national character of the people amongst whom it had been perpetrated. But in tracing the source of this and other barbarities which had been committed in France, he must differ with the right honorable gentleman and the noble lord who had moved and seconded the address, and coincide with the noble lord who had just spoke. He denied that such had been the *necessary* consequences of the French revolution or that such horrors were the *necessary* associates of republicanism. To the conduct of the powers combined against the liberties of France, to the sanguinary manifestos of the duke of Brunswick, he conceived all these murders were to be attributed. Such manifestos, he said, bore the stamp and character of those barbarians, both ancient and modern, to whom to conquer and to destroy were the same, rather than of the gallant and enlightened leaders of the armies of two enlightened princes of Europe, the close of the eighteenth century. The spirit of Attila was discernible in them, who describing the manner in which himself made war, in the emphatical words recorded by Mr. Gibbon, had said, 'Where Attila horse sets his foot, the grass never grows;' in modern times he knew no parallel to the devastation threatened but in the eloquent account given by a right honorable gentleman (Mr. Burke) of the descent of Hider Ally to the Carnatic. Both leaders appear equally to have crept to make the countries possessed by the incorrigible

and predestinated criminals opposed to them, a memorable example to mankind; both seemed equally to have resolved to place perpetual desolation as a barrier between themselves and those against whom the ties which hold the moral elements of the world together, they deemed no protection. It was a melancholy consideration to humanity that, in endeavouring to turn our eyes from the scenes of blood in France, we could find no relief in contemplating the mild and christian virtues of the powers leagued against her. It had been said, in palliation of their manifestos that there had been no intention of carrying the letter of them into execution. Upon the folly of threatening that which we cannot or do not intend to execute, he should make no comment: but what pledge had we that this assertion was true? The only victims which had fallen into the hands of the combined powers had been treated with exemplary cruelty and injustice. If on the one hand he saw Louis the sixteenth confined in the prison of the temple, on the other he saw M. la Fayette and his unfortunate companions lingering in the cells of a German fortress. To a man of any firmness and resolution, the election would not be difficult to make between the, catastrophe and final momentary sufferings of Louis, and the slow consuming horrors in which la Fayette dragged on his existence. He repeated his abhorrence of the execution of Louis, and having done so, said, that in deliberating on the subsequent parts of the address, he should, as much as possible, divest himself of those feelings which such an act was calculated to excite; because, if ever there was a crisis in which members of parliament ought to deliberate coolly and dispassionately, it certainly was the present, when, as it appeared to him, a matter of no less moment was to be debated, than whether we were to have peace or war. He professed himself an advocate for peace; for peace, as connected with the prosperity of the country; for the prosperity of the country, as connected with its honor: for the honor and prosperity of any country he considered inseparable. The house was then to consider whether war

war was justifiable upon any grounds stated in the papers upon the table, and whether ministers had done their utmost to avert that calamity. To both these he gave a decided negative; and before he adverted to the grounds stated in the papers, he should say something as to the real cause of the war, as he conceived it would at length appear to be, if war were undertaken. This was no less than the total overthrow of the new system of government existing in France; for no other reason could ministers have refused to acknowledge the republic. They had admitted of non-official communications; this was an acknowledgment of the power residing in those persons with whom they thus communicated; but they refused to acknowledge the right of those persons to the exercise of the power with which they were invested. This was securing the possibility of joining with the combined powers, whenever a convenient opportunity might offer, for the overthrow of the new system. He deprecated such an attempt as contrary to the rights of nations. No country had a right to interfere with the internal arrangements adopted by another. *The national will was supreme in every country*; and that alone could constitute, alter, or modify forms of government. Could any man doubt that the nation willed a republic in France? If we attempted to interfere with the disposition of the national will, let us recollect upon what grounds the title of the king of England stood—upon the will of the nation; and one of the most despotic sovereigns in Europe, the empress of Russia, owed her elevation to the supposed expression of the national will at the revolution in 1762. She possessed the throne upon no other footing: and what form of government soever any nation willed for itself, such it had the right to adopt. It now came to the first stated ground of complaint of the country against France—the decree of November the nineteenth; which decree he did not in itself defend, but he contended that the explanation which the French had been disposed to give of that decree, was such as

take away all well grounded apprehensions of any injury designed to this country, and certainly would not justify us in going to war: The next object stated was the aggrandizement of France, which was likely to endanger the balance of Europe. Upon the subject of the balance of Europe, which now appeared to be a matter of such signal importance, he begged to call the attention of the house, and to the general conduct of his majesty's ministers in their endeavours to maintain that balance. At the time the despotic powers had formed a combination against France, which it was not conceivable that she could resist; when it appeared that the country was to be over-run, and to become an easy prey to the duke of Brunswick, no apprehensions were entertained on account of the balance of power; the same supineness had been visible when the empress of Russia, in the course of the last summer, had taken possession of Poland: but now that the French were victorious, and had defeated their enemies, combined to crush them, the balance of power was in danger! but the aggrandizement of France was dangerous as connected with the principles she propagated: he begged to know whether this apprehension was not equally well founded, when applied to the case of Russia? he conceived the principles of despotism propagated by the sword of the one, as dangerous to the general security of Europe, as the licentiousness propagated by the sword of the other. With regard to the request urged by the British government, that the French should withdraw their troops within their own territory, in order to pave the way to any negotiation with us, he thought such a demand the height of insolence. France had been attacked; she had successfully repelled that attack, and gained possession of the territory of her adversary, and had a right to maintain that possession, at least to the conclusion of the war, to enable her to make advantageous terms for herself. We had forced her to an participation of her designs on the subject of Brabant. She had declared her intentions not to add the low countries to her own territories; but to suffer the Belgians to

to erect themselves into an independent sovereignty. He was not now enquiring whether it were justifiable to detach provinces from the power to which they belonged, and to give them independence; but the idea was not new; he recollected to have heard a right honorable gentleman (Mr. Burke) recommend it to the present minister as an object worthy to establish his reputation as a great statesman, to rescue the provinces of Bessarabia, Moldavia, and Wallachia, from the tyranny of the grand Signior, and to erect them into an independent federated state, under the circle of the Danube. He did not conceive that ministers entertained any real apprehensions, on the subject of the aggrandizement of France, as endangering the security of Europe, to which their inattention had been so notorious, nor did he find any justifiable cause for war on this ground. The only remaining consideration was upon the subject of the exclusive navigation of the Scheld. He had before stated an opinion on the subject of the natural right of the inhabitants of the banks of rivers to the free use and enjoyment of the waters of such rivers. He begged to restate his opinion; it was comprised in the words of that part of the decree of the national convention, which says, 'that the course of rivers is the common property of all the countries watered by them; that a nation cannot, without injustice, pretend to the right of occupying the channel of a river to prevent the neighbouring nations who occupy the upper banks from enjoying the same advantage.' He did not go the length of that decree in saying that 'such right was revocable at every moment, and in spite of a convention,' for he held that the faith of treaties was paramount, and must be abided by. The right contended for was antecedent to all treaty, that natural right the nearer to which all treaties came, the nearer they were to the principles of justice. But if he were to whence the French drew what were now deemed the extravagant notions on this point, he should look to subsequent productions of a right honorable member of that house (Mr. Burke) who had said in a celebrated speech

speech, that 'the benefits of heaven to any community ought never to be connected with political arrangements, or made to depend on the personal conduct of princes; in which the mistake, or error, or neglect, or distress, or passion of a moment, on either side, may bring famine on millions, and ruin an innocent nation, perhaps, for ages. The means of the subsistence of mankind should be as immutable as the laws of nature, let power and dominion take what course they may. The use of this river has indeed been given to the rajah, &c.—*This use of the water, which ought to have no more connection than clouds and rains and sunshine with the politics of the rajah, the nabob, or the company, is expressly contrived as a means of enforcing demands and arrears of tribute. This horrid and unnatural instrument of extortion had been a distinguishing feature in the enormities of the Carnatic politics.*' Thus had Mr. Burke thought, and thus did think the national convention; but he owned that he did not go the whole length of their doctrines. A hard necessity, indeed, he should conceive it for Great Britain, to be forced to go to war, to maintain to the Dutch the exclusive navigation of the Scheld; but he had never said that he was against supporting the faith of treaties, where the *casus foederis* was clearly defined. But was it, in this instance, a new and unexercised right of nature for which it was contended? certainly not. Antwerp was a monument of the exercise of that right by her inhabitants; and he was free to say, that it would give him joy to see the commerce of that once flourishing city restored; for the exclusive navigation of the Scheld had been 'established by force, and consented to by weakness.' But a necessary preliminary to these investigations, would have been some precise requisition of the Dutch for the stipulated assistance of her ally. The chancellor of the exchequer had avowed that no such demand had been made; and if the house were to judge of the dispositions of the states general by their own declarations, he believed it would be found that they did not think it worth their while to go to war for the

the maintenance of this right. He alluded to the proclamation for a general fast put forth by the states general on January the tenth, in which they declare that they are then *at peace*, and that the strict neutrality they observed had *hitherto protected them from aggression*. A manifest token that they did not consider the free navigation of the Scheld, as asserted by the French, a reason for going to war. If then we did go to war on that ground, we should force our allies into it, and not ourselves be involved in it by the terms of our alliance." Mr. Whitbread said, "that having gone through the matter contained in the papers, as far as they related to the probability of war, he could find no justification of the conduct of administration. He thought the maintenance of peace, consistently with the dignity, honor, and interests of this country, was perfectly in the power of ministers; but their conduct and words denoted war. He had still, however a hope of peace remaining; that hope was founded on the knowledge he had of the character of his majesty's present servants. He knew that they had the faculty of enlarging or reducing objects precisely to the form in which they wished to consider them. That at one time, the little fortress of Oczakow had deranged their balance of power in Europe; that at another, the whole kingdom of Poland had been thrown in without making a vibration in their political beam. He knew that they had never advanced too far to recede; that they had never threatened too much to retreat. Their sentiments might again change. This, he confessed, was a desperate hope, because it was connected with the reflection that the reins of government were in the hands of men so insufficient, so versatile, and so weak. He concluded with saying that he could not give his assent to the address."

XXVI. Mr. Fox said, "that although some words had fallen from the right honorable gentlemen (Mr. Pitt), which might lead him to think, that war was not absolutely determined upon, yet the general tenor and impression of his speech was such as to induce him

to enter somewhat at large into the subject, as to convince him that there never was a time when the duty, not merely to his immediate constituents, but to the whole people of Great Britain, of whom the members of that house were individually and collectively the virtual representatives, more imperiously called upon him, and upon every man, to speak out and declare his sentiments frankly and fairly. The misrepresentations and misconstructions of what he, and those who thought as he did, had already said, in the course of the present session, left no room to doubt, that what he now must say, would be equally, and, perhaps, as successfully misrepresented and misconstrued. This only served to shew, that they were on a service of honor, as well as danger; but if misrepresentation and calumny were to deter him from delivering opinions because they might be unpopular, from deprecating a war with France, as an evil to be avoided by every possible means, consistent with the honor and safety of us and our allies, he should basely betray his trust to his constituents and his country. The right honorable gentleman had introduced the several grounds of dispute with France, ably and accurately; but the reasons for going to war, he did not mean to say for arming, had not been very accurately treated. The crimes, the murders, and the massacres, that had been committed in France, he did not view with less horror, he did not consider as less atrocious than those who made them the perpetual theme of their declamation, although he put them entirely out of the question in the present debate. The condemnation and execution of the king, he pronounced an act as disgraceful as any that history recorded; and whatever opinion he might at any time have expressed in private conversation, he had expressed none certainly in that house, on the justice of bringing kings to trial, revenge being unattainable, and punishment useless, where it could not operate either by way of prevention or example; he did not view with less detestation the injustice and inhumanity that had been committed against that unhappy monarch

monarch. Not only were the rules of criminal justice, rules that more than any other ought to be strictly observed, violated with respect to him; not only was he tried and condemned, without any existing law to which he was personally amenable, and even contrary to laws that did actually exist, but the degrading circumstances of his imprisonment, the unnecessary and insulting asperity with which he had been treated, the total want of republican magnanimity in the whole transaction (for even in that house it could be no offence to say, that there might be such a thing as magnanimity in a republic), added every aggravation to the inhumanity and injustice. Now, having said all this, as the genuine expression of his feelings and his reason, he saw neither propriety nor wisdom in that house, passing judgment on any act committed in another nation, which had no direct reference to us. The general maxim of policy always was, that the crimes perpetrated in one independent state were not cognizable by another. Need he remind the house of our former conduct in this respect? Had we not treated, had we not formed alliances with Portugal and with Spain, at the very time when these kingdoms were disgraced and polluted by the most shocking and barbarous acts of superstition and cruelty, of racks, torture, and burning, under the abominable tyranny of the inquisition? Did we ever make these outrages against reason and humanity a pretext for war? Did we ever inquire how the princes with whom we had relative interests either obtained or exercised their power? Why then were the enormities of the French in their own country held up as a cause of war? Much of these enormities had been attributed to the attack of the combined powers; but this he neither considered as an excuse, nor would argue as a palliation. If they had dreaded, or had felt an attack, to retaliate on their fellow citizens, however much suspected, was not proceeding which justice disclaimed; and he had flattered himself, that when men were disclaiming old, and professing to adopt new principles, those of persecution

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and revenge would be the first that they would discard. No man felt greater horror at the proceedings of the combined powers than he did. A combination more dangerous to the tranquillity of Europe, and the liberties of mankind, had never been formed. It had been said, that Austria was not the aggressor in the war with France. Had those, who said so, seen the treaty of Pilnitz. Let them look at that treaty, take the golden rule of supposing themselves in the situation of the French, and judging of others as they would wish to be judged, and say whether or not the French had been the aggressors. But whatever might be thought of Austria, was the king of Prussia attacked by France? Were his territories menaced, or his allies insulted? Had he not been completely the aggressor, he would have called upon us as his allies for succour; no such call had ever been heard of; a sufficient proof, if any proof were wanting, that he never considered himself but as engaging in an offensive war. What were the principles of these combined powers? They saw a new form of government establishing in France, and they agreed to invade the kingdom, to mould its government according to their own caprice, or to restore the despotism which the French had overthrown. Was it for the safety of English liberty (liberty that might still be mentioned without offence), that we should make any change in our form of government, or constitution, and that change should be disagreeable to foreign powers, they should be considered as having a right to combine, and replace what we had rejected, or give us any thing else in its room by fire and sword. He would not go over the atrocious manifestos that preceded, or followed the march of the combined armies; there was not a man in the house, or, at least, but one (Mr. Burke) who would attempt to defend them. But these it seemed were not to be executed; he hoped they were not; but the only security he knew of was, that those who issued them had not the means. What was their conduct? Their mode of raising money was at least as

bad as that with which the French were reproached. The French confiscated property, where they carried their arms; the Duke of Brunswick took what he wanted, and gave papers for it in the name of the unfortunate monarch whom he pretended to assist. He contracted debts in the name of the French king, which he knew the French king might never have the means or the inclination to pay: and this swindling trick, for which any man in this country would have been convicted and punished, he continued after he began his retreat, yet we stood by and saw all this without alarm, certainly without interference. We perceived no danger in the success of despotism? but the moment the opposite cause became successful, our fears became extreme. He should now shew, that all the topics to which he had adverted, were introduced into the debate to blind the judgment, by rousing the passions, and were none of them the just grounds of war. These grounds were three: the danger of Holland; the decree of the French convention of November the nineteenth, and the general danger to Europe, from the progress of the French arms. With respect to Holland, the conduct of ministers afforded a fresh proof of their dissimulation. They could not state, that the Dutch had called upon us to fulfil the terms of our alliance. They were obliged to confess, that no such requisition had been made; but added, that they knew the Dutch were very much disposed to make it. Whatever might be the words of the treaty, we were bound in honor, by virtue of that treaty, to protect the Dutch, if they called upon us to do so, but neither by honor nor the treaty till then. The conduct of the Dutch was very unfortunate upon this occasion. In the order for a general fallacy by the states, it was expressly said, 'That their neutrality seemed to put them into security amidst surrounding armies, and hitherto effectually protected them from molestation.' This he by no means construed into giving up the opening of the Scheld on their part; but it pretty clearly shewed, that they were not dis-

posed

posed to make it the cause of a war, unless forced to do so by us. But France had broke faith with the Dutch; was this a cause for us to go to war? How long was it since we considered a circumstance tending to diminish the good understanding between France and Holland, as a misfortune to this country? The plain state of the matter was, that we were bound to save Holland from war, or by war if called upon; and that to force the Dutch into a war at so much peril to them, which they saw and dreaded, was not to fulfil, but to abuse the treaty. Hence he complained of the disingenuous conduct of ministers, in imputing that to the Dutch, which the Dutch wished to avoid. The decree of the nineteenth of November, he considered as an insult; and the explanation of the executive council as no adequate satisfaction; but the explanation shewed that the French were not disposed to insist upon that decree, and that they were inclined to peace, and then our ministers, with haughtiness unexampled, told them they had insulted us, but refused to tell them the nature of the satisfaction that we required. It was said, we must have security; and he was ready to admit that neither a disavowal by the executive council of France, nor a tacit repeal by the convention, on the intimation of an unacknowledged agent, of a decree, which they might renew the day after they repealed it, would be a sufficient security. But at least we ought to tell them what we meant by security, for it was the extreme of arrogance to complain of insult without deigning to explain what reparation we required: and he feared an indefinite term was here employed, not for the purpose of obtaining, but of precluding satisfaction. Next it was said, they must withdraw their troops from the Austrian Netherlands, before we could be satisfied. Were we then come to that pitch of insolence, as to say to France, 'You have conquered part of an enemy's territory, who made war upon you, we will not interfere to make peace, but we require you to abandon the advantages you have gained, while he is preparing to attack you anew.' Was this the

the neutrality we meant to hold out to France? 'If you are invaded and beaten, we will be quiet spectators; but if you hurt your enemy, if you enter his territory, we declare war against you.' If the invasion of the Netherlands was what now alarmed us, and that it ought to alarm us if the result was to make the country an appendage to France, there could be no doubt, we ought to have interposed to prevent it in the very first instance; for it was the natural consequence which every man foresaw of a war between France and Austria. The French now said, they would evacuate the country at the conclusion of the war, and when its liberties were established. Was this sufficient? By no means: but we ought to tell what we would deem sufficient, instead of saying to them, as we were now saying, 'this is an aggravation, this is nothing, and this is insufficient.' That war was unjust which told not an enemy the ground of provocation, and the measure of atonement; it was as impolitic as unjust; for without the object of contest, clearly and definitely stated, what opening could there be for treating of peace? Before going to war with France, surely the people, who must pay and suffer, ought to be informed on what object they were to fix their hopes for its honorable termination. After five or six years war, the French might agree to evacuate the Netherlands as the price of peace; was it clear that they would not do so now, if we would condescend to propose it in intelligible terms? Surely in such an alternative, the experiment was worth trying: but then we had no security against the French principles.—What security would they be able to give us, after a war which they could not give now? With respect to the general danger of Europe, the same arguments applied, and to the same extent. To the general situation and security of Europe, we had been so scandalously inattentive; we had seen the entire conquest of Poland, and the invasion of France, with such marked indifference, that it would be difficult now to take it up with the grace of sincerity; but even then

would

would be better provided for, by proposing terms before going to war. He had thus shewn that none of the professed causes were grounds for going to war. What then remained but the internal government of France, always disavowed, but ever kept in mind, and constantly mentioned? The destruction of that government was the avowed object of the combined powers whom it was hoped we were to join; and we could not join them heartily if our object were one thing while theirs was another; for in that case the party whose object was first obtained might naturally be expected to make separate terms, and there could be no cordiality nor confidence. To this then we came at last, that we were ashamed to own engaging to aid the restoration of despotism, and collusively sought pretexts in the Scheld and the Netherlands. Such would be the real cause of the war, if war we were to have—a war, which he trusted he should soon see as generally execrated as it was now thought to be popular. He knew, that for this wish, he should be represented as holding up the internal government of France as an object for imitation. He thought the present state of government in France nothing less; but he maintained as a principle inviolable, that the government of every independent state was to be settled by those who were to live under it, and not by foreign force. The conduct of the French in the Netherlands was the same with such a war, as he was now deprecating, and might be an omen of its success. It was a war of pikes and bayonets against opinions; it was the tyranny of giving liberty by compulsion; it was an attempt to introduce a system among a people by force, which the more it was forced upon them, the more they abhorred. The French appeared less moderate, from pretending to be more so, than other nations; by overturning the ancient government, and imposing theories of their own on a people who disliked them, while they pretended to liberate, instead of using their right of conquest. But was this such a crime in the eyes of Europe? As was said of the woman caught in adultery, which of the courts,

courts, would that of London or Berlin cast the first stone? The states of Brabant, they were told, had *passa conventa*, a legal and free government of their own. But were the states free under the house of Austria, under Joseph, Leopold, or Francis? O yes! for when Dumourier was triumphantly entering Brussels, and the Austrian government making their escape at a postern, they sent back a declaration to the states, restoring their *magna charta*, the *joyeuse entrée*, which had been the perpetual subject of dispute with their sovereign, and which all their remonstrances could never obtain before. This was the government that acted with such honor to its subjects, and put the French to shame. He feared that if they were to examine the conduct of foreign powers, in point of honor and good faith, they must be compelled to speak less civilly of them than policy would dictate. Why, then, had he touched upon it? Because the conduct of France was perpetually introduced to inflame and delude, and it was his duty to dispel the delusion, by shewing it was not more exceptionable than that of its neighbours. In all decisions on peace or war, it was important to consider what we might lose, and what we could gain. On the one hand, extension of territory was neither expected nor eligible. On the other, although he feared not the threat of the French marine minister, would any man say that our ally might not suffer; that the events of war might not produce a change in the internal state of Holland, and in the situation of the stadtholder, too afflicting for him to anticipate. In weighing the probable danger, every consideration ought to be put into the scale. Was the state of Ireland such as to make war desirable? That was a subject which had been said by some honorable gentleman to be too delicate to be touched upon; but he approved not of that delicacy which taught men to shut their eyes to danger. The state of Ireland he was not afraid to mention. He thought it both promising and alarming; promising, because the government of this country had forced the government of that to an acknowledgment

knowledge of the undoubted rights of a great majority of the people of Ireland, after having, in a former session, treated their humble petition with contempt, and in the summer endeavoured to stir up the protestants against the catholics; alarming because the gross misconduct of administration had brought the government and the legislature into contempt in the eyes of the people. Here he called on his right honorable friend (Mr. Windham) who had given the aid of his great talents, as secretary in Ireland, to an administration with which he had the honor of being connected, on the same principles on which he had declared, that he would support ministers when they had done mischief enough to be formidable, when they brought the country into a situation sufficiently perilous, to accept of the same situation again, and avert the danger which they had created.— He hoped the plan to be pursued would be conciliatory, that concession to the claims of the people would be deemed wisdom, and the time of danger the fit time for reform, in every thing contrary to the declarations of the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) here. The people of this country loved their constitution. They had experienced its benefits; they were attached to it from habit. Why put their love to any unnecessary test? That love by being tried could not be made greater, nor would the fresh burthens and taxes, which war must occasion, more endear it to their affection.— If there were any danger from French principles, to go to war without necessity was to fight for their propagation. On these principles, as reprobated in the proposed address, he would freely give his opinion. It was not the principles that were bad and to be reprobated, but the abuse of them. From the abuse, not the principles, had flowed all the evils that afflicted France. The use of the word equality by the French was deemed highly objectionable. When taken as they meant it nothing was more innocent; for what did they say, ‘all men are equal in respect of their rights.’ To this he assented; all men had equal rights; equal rights to unequal

equal things; one man to a shilling, another to a thousand pounds; one man to a cottage, another to a palace; but the right in both was the same; an equal right of enjoying, an equal right of inheriting or acquiring; and of possessing inheritance or acquisition.—The effect of the proposed address was to condemn, not the abuse of those principles, (and the French had much abused them), but the principles themselves. To this he could not assent, for they were the principles on which all just and equitable government was founded. He had already differed sufficiently with a right honorable gentleman (Mr. Burke) on this subject, not to wish to provoke any fresh difference; but even against so great an authority he must say, that the people are the sovereigns in every state; that they have a right to change the form of their government, and a right to cashier their governors for misconduct, as the people of this country cashiered James II. not by a parliament, or any regular form known to the constitution, but by a convention speaking the sense of the people; that convention produced a parliament and a king. They elected William to a vacant throne, not only setting aside James, whom they had justly cashiered for misconduct, but his innocent son. Again they elected the house of Brunswick, not individually, but by dynasty; and that dynasty to continue while the terms and conditions on which it was elected are fulfilled, and no longer. He could not admit the right of doing all this but by acknowledging the sovereignty of the people as paramount to all other laws. But it was said, that although we had once exercised this power, we had in the very act of exercising it, renounced it for ever.—We had neither renounced it, nor, if we had been so disposed, was such a renunciation in our power. We elected first an individual, then a dynasty, and lastly, passed an act of parliament, in the reign of queen Anne, declaring it to be the right of the people of this realm to do so again without even assigning a reason. If there were any persons among us who doubted the superior wisdom of our monarchs,

form of government, their error was owing to those who changed its strong and irrefragable foundation in the right and choice of the people, to a more flimsy ground of title. Those who proposed repelling opinions by force, the example of the French in the Netherlands might teach the impotence of power to repel or introduce. But how was a war to operate in keeping opinions supposed dangerous out of this country? It was not surely meant to beat the French out of their own opinions; and opinions were not like commodities, the importation of which from France war would prevent.— War, it was to be lamented, was a passion inherent in the nature of man; and it was curious to observe what at various periods had been the various pretexts. In ancient times wars were made for conquest. To these succeeded wars for religion; and the opinions of Luther and Calvin were attacked with all the fury of superstition and of power. The next pretext was commerce; and it would probably be allowed that no nation that made war for commerce ever found the object accomplished, on concluding peace. Now we were to make war about opinions; what was this but recurring again to an exploded cause; for a war about principles in religion was as much war about opinions, as a war about principles in politics. In the excellent set of papers alluded to by the right honorable gentleman, (Mr. Pitt) and which he had no doubt had been liberally distributed to the gentlemen who had got so many new lights on the French affairs, the atheistical speech of Dupont in the convention was quoted. Did they believe all the French to be atheists and unbelievers on account of that speech? If they did so believe, there would certainly be no reason to complain of them for want of faith. But admitting that the French were atheists, were we going to war with them in order to propagate the christian religion by means contrary to the precepts of Christ? The justifiable grounds of war were insult, injury, or danger. For the first, satisfaction; for the second, reparation; for the third, security was the object. Each of these, too, was the proper object of negotiation,

gotiation, which ought ever to precede war, except in case of an attack actually commenced. How had we negotiated? Not in any public or sufficient form, a mode which he suspected, and lamented, by his proposing it had been prevented. A noble lord (Beauchamp) had said 'that he thought it his duty not to conceal his opinions on so important an occasion, by absence or by silence: formerly the noble lord did not think absence so great a crime. During the nine unfortunate years that he had maintained the same political connections with him, the noble lord's attendance had not been very assiduous; and he rejoiced to hear that the noble lord meant now to compensate for past omissions by future diligence. When the triple league was formed to check the ambition of Louis the fourteenth, the contracting parties did not deal so rigorously by him, as we were now told it was essential to the peace of Europe that we should deal by the French. They never told Louis that he must renounce all his conquests, in order to obtain peace. But then it was said to be our duty to hate the French for the part they took in the American war. He had heard of a duty to love, but a duty to hate was new to him. That duty, however, ought to direct our hatred to the old government of France, not to the new, which had no hand in the provocation. Unfortunately the new French government was admitted to be the successor of the old in nothing but its faults and its offences. It was a successor to be hated and to war against; but it was not a successor to be negotiated with. He feared, however, that war would be the result, and from war apprehending greater evils than he durst name, he should have shrunk from his duty if he had not endeavoured to obtain an exposition of the distinct causes: of all wars he dreaded that the most which had no definite object, because of such a war it was impossible to see the end. Our war with America had a definite object, an unjust one indeed but still definite; and after wading through years of years of expence and blood, after exhausting invective and terms of contempt on the vagrant congress, one

Adamus,

Adams, one Washington, &c. &c. we were compelled at last to treat with this very congress, and those very men. The Americans, to the honor of their character, committed no such horrid acts as had disgraced the French; but we were as liberal of our obloquy to the former then, as to the latter now. If we did but know for what we were to fight, we might look forward with confidence, and exert ourselves with unanimity; but while kept thus in the dark, how many might there be who would believe that we were fighting the battles of despotism. To undeceive those who might fall into this unhappy delusion, it would be no derogation from the dignity of office to grant an explanation. If the right honorable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) would but yet consider— if he would but save the country from a war—above all, a war of opinion, however inconsistent with his former declarations his measures might be, he would gladly consent to give him a general indemnity for the whole, and even a vote of thanks. Let not the fatal opinion go abroad that kings had an interest different from that of their subjects; that between those who had property and those who had none there was not a common cause and common feeling. He knew that he himself should now be represented the partizan of France, as he had been formerly represented the partizan of America. He was no stranger to the industry with which these and other calumnies were circulated against him; and therefore he was not surprised; but he really was surprised to find that he could not walk the streets without hearing whispers that he and some of his friends had been engaged in improper correspondence with persons in France. If there were any foundation for such a charge, the source of the information could be mentioned; if it were true, it was capable of proof. If any man believed this, he called upon him to state the reasons of his belief. If any man had proofs, he challenged him to produce them. What to what was this owing? The people had been told that their representatives in parliament that they were surrounded with dangers, and had been shewn none. They were

were therefore full of suspicion, and prompt of belief. All this had a material tendency to impede freedom of discussion, for men would speak with reserve, or not speak at all, under the terror of calumny. But he found, by a letter in a newspaper, from Mr. Law, that he lived in a town where a set of men associated, and calling themselves gentlemen [Mr. Reeves's Association] not only received anonymous letters reflecting on individuals, but corresponded with the writers of such letters, and even sometimes transmitted their slanders to the secretary of state. He could not be much surprised at any aspersion on his character, knowing this; and therefore he hoped the house would give him the credit of being innocent till an open charge was made, and that if any man heard improper correspondence imputed to him in private, he would believe that he heard a falsehood which he who circulated it in secret durst not speak in public." The question being put on the motion, the address was carried without a division.

XXVII. These debates are perhaps sufficient to convince the most incredulous that the British ministry were determined on war—that they were more solicitous to colour the pretext for hostilities against France, than to obtain satisfaction for the acts of aggression complained of as appears from the tenor of their proceedings. If in support of these charges any additional proof is wanting we shall find it amply supplied by a letter from Lord Auckland, the English ambassador at the Hague, dated January the twenty fifth, 1793, and presented to the state general immediately on the departure of M. Chauvelin. In this letter, his lordship affirms to their high mightinesses, in language which sets all ideas of decency and decorum at defiance, that "not four years ago some WRETCHES, assuming the title of philosophers, had the presumption to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize the dream of their vanity, they found it necessary to overthrow and destroy all received notions of subordination, manners, and religion, which have hitherto formed the

the security, happiness, and consolation of the human race. Their destructive projects have but too well succeeded. But the effects of the new system which they endeavoured to introduce served only to shew the imbecility and VILLANY of its authors. The events, which so rapidly followed each other since that epoch, surpass in atrocity all which had ever polluted the pages of history. Property, liberty, security, even life itself, have been deemed play things in the hands of IMFAMOUS men, who are the slaves of the most licentious passions of rapine, enmity and ambition." From the conduct of the English government at home, and the very high language and sentiments conveyed through their diplomatic organs abroad, the French now saw that every hope of peace was vanished. The convention therefore came to the resolution of anticipating the designs of the English and the Dutch, and, by a decree unanimously passed on the first of February 1793, declared the republic of France at war with the king of Great Britain, and the stadtholder of Holland.

APPENDIX

TO THE

FIRST VOLUME OF THE SUPPLEMENT.

THAT the British court manifested a friendly disposition to the French revolution, prior to the tenth of August 1792, when the royal power was suspended in France—is one of those assertions of the English minister, which admits of very considerable doubt. If, instead of their *declarations*, we judge from the *conduct* of the British cabinet, we shall find very intelligible indications of dislike *even* to the French constitution of 1789. Lord Auckland, in his letter of the twenty fifth of January, 1793, to the states general, says, "it is not quite four years since certain *wretches* assuming the name of philosophers, &c." Here it is perfectly clear that he comprehends

prehends in his vulgar and violent censure the limited monarchy settled by the constitution of 1789, as well as the republican form of government established in 1792; and when it is considered that this part of his lordship's conduct was, at a subsequent period, publicly defended and approved by ministers in parliament, little doubt can remain of the real sentiments of the British court respecting the French revolution of 1789.

Another pointed instance of the secret hostility of the English government towards the French constitution of 1789, appears in the correspondence between lord Grenville and M. Chauvelin in May 1792. The latter invariably styles Louis the sixteenth, "The king of the French," which was the title decreed by the national assembly, and the former as invariably styles him "His most christian majesty," which was the title during the old despotism.

The following authentic papers will sufficiently evince the disposition of our court towards France after the commencement of her republican period, and will enable the reader to judge for himself, whether the British cabinet might not by prudent and conciliatory measures, have averted from this country a war, the consequences of which must be so long and so severely felt, that posterity will quote its origin as an æra of signal calamity to England.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin, to Lord Grenville, December 27th, 1792.

"Portman square, December 27th, 1792.

"The first year of the republic.

"The undersigned minister plenipotentiary of France has the honor to communicate to his excellency lord Grenville, the instructions which he has received from the executive council of the French republic, with orders to lay them before his Britannic majesty's secretary of state for the department of foreign affairs, in case he should believe that he could not sufficiently soon obtain an interview with that minister. The French government, by continuing, since the recall of lord Gower from Paris,

A. D. 1793.

GEORGE III.

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Paris, to leave at London its minister plenipotentiary, conceived that it gave his Britannic majesty an unequivocal proof of the desire it had to continue to live upon good terms with him, and to dispel those clouds which the events necessary and inherent to the internal regulations of France appeared at that time to have occasioned. The intentions of the executive council of France, with regard to England, have not ceased to be the same; but it has not been able to see with indifference the public conduct which the British ministry maintains at present towards France. It is with regret that it has remarked in this conduct a character of ill will, to which it is yet unwilling to give credit. It has however felt that its duty to the French nation required it no longer to leave it in a state of uncertainty, into which it had been thrown by several measures recently adopted by the British government—an uncertainty which must be shared by the British nation, and which is equally unworthy of both countries.

“The executive council of the French republic has, in consequence, authorized the minister of France, at London, to demand with openness of the ministers of his Britannic majesty, if France ought to consider England as a neutral power, or as an enemy; and it has especially charged him to obtain a definitive answer upon this point.

“But, in asking from the ministers of his Britannic majesty a frank and open explanation as to their intentions with regard to France, the executive council is unwilling they should have the smallest remaining doubt as to the disposition of France towards England, and as to its desire of remaining in peace with her; it has even been desirous of answering before hand, all the reproaches which they may be tempted to make in justification of a rupture.

“On reflecting what may be the reasons which may determine his Britannic majesty to break with the French republic, the executive council has been able to find no other than a false interpretation, which is, perhaps, given to the decree of the national convention of the nineteenth

nineteenth of November. If a real alarm has been occasioned by this decree, it can have arisen only for want of understanding its true sense. The national convention never meant that the French republic should favor insurrections, should espouse the quarrels of a few seditious persons, or, in a word, should endeavour to excite disturbances in any neutral or friendly country whatever. Such an idea would be rejected by all the French. It cannot be imputed to the national convention without doing it injustice. This decree then is applicable only to those people who, after having acquired their liberty by conquest, may have demanded the fraternity, the assistance of the French republic, by the solemn and unequivocal expression of the general will.

"France ought and will respect not only the independence of England, but even that of those of her allies, with whom she is at war. The undersigned has therefore been charged formally to declare that she will not attack Holland, so long as that power shall, on its side, confine itself towards her within the bounds of an exact neutrality.

"The British government being thus set at its ease upon these two points, no pretence for the smallest difficulty could remain, except as to the question of the opening of the Scheldt, a question irrevocably decided by reason and by justice, of small importance in itself, and on which the opinion of England, and perhaps of Holland itself, is sufficiently known, to render it difficult seriously to make it the single subject of a war.—Should, however, the British ministry avail itself of this last motive, as a cause of declaring war against France, would it not, in such case, be probable that its secret intention must have been, at all events, to bring on a rupture; and that it made use, at the present moment, of the vainest of all pretences to colour an unjust aggression, long ago determined upon?

"On this unfortunate supposition, which the executive council rejects, the undersigned would be authorized forcibly to support the dignity of the French people, and to declare with firmness, that this free and powerful people

people will accept the war, and repel with indignation an aggression so manifestly unjust, and so little provoked on its part. When every explanation, calculated to demonstrate the purity of the intentions of France, when all peaceable and conciliatory measures shall have been exhausted by her, it is evident that all the weight, all the responsibility of the war, will fall sooner or later on those who shall have provoked it. It will, in fact, be nothing but a war of the administration alone against the French republic; and if this truth could for a moment appear doubtful, it would not perhaps be impossible for France speedily to convince of this a nation, which in bestowing its confidence, has never renounced the exercise of its reason, or its respect for truth and justice.

"Such are the instructions which the undersigned has received orders to communicate officially to his excellency lord Grenville; inviting him, as well as the whole council of his Britannic majesty, to weigh, with the most serious attention, the declarations and the demands which they contain. It is evident that the French nation is desirous of maintaining peace with England; she affords a proof of this by lending herself frankly and openly to dissipate all the suspicions which so many different passions and prejudices are unceasingly at work to raise up against her; but the more she shall have done to convince all Europe of the purity of her views, and of the justice of her intentions, the more will she have a right to expect no longer to be misunderstood.

"The undersigned has orders to demand a written answer to the present note. He hopes that the ministers of his Britannic majesty will be brought back, by the explanations which it contains, to ideas more favorable to the re-union of the two countries, and that they will not have occasion, for the purpose of returning to them, to consider the terrible responsibility of a declaration of war, which will incontestibly be their own work, the consequences of which cannot be otherwise than fatal to the two countries, and to human nature in general, and in which

which a generous and free people cannot long consent to betray their own interests, by serving as an auxiliary and a reinforcement to a tyrannical coalition.

(Signed)

" F. Chauvelin."

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, dated Whitehall, December 31, 1792.

" Whitehall, December 31, 1792.

" I have received, Sir, from you a note, in which, styling yourself minister plenipotentiary of France, you communicate to me, as the king's secretary of state, the instructions which you state to have yourself received from the executive council of the French republic. You are not ignorant that, since the unhappy events of the tenth of August, the king has thought proper to suspend all official communication with France. You are yourself no otherwise accredited to the king than in the name of his most christian majesty. The proposition of receiving a minister accredited by any other authority or power in France, would be a new question, which, whenever it should occur, the king would have the right to decide according to the interests of his subjects, his own dignity, and the regard which he owes to his allies and to the general system of Europe. I am therefore to inform you, Sir, in express and formal terms, that I acknowledge you in no other public character than that of minister from his most christian majesty, and that consequently you cannot be admitted to treat with the king's ministers, in the quality and under the form stated in your note.

" But observing that you have entered into explanations of some of the circumstances which have given to England such strong grounds of uneasiness and jealousy, and that you speak of these explanations as being of a nature to bring our two countries nearer, I have been unwilling to convey to you the notification stated above, without, at the same time, explaining myself clearly and distinctly on the subject of what you have communicated

to

to me, though under a form which is neither regular nor official.

"Your explanations are confined to three points.—The first is that of the decree of the national convention of the nineteenth of November, in the expressions of which all England saw the formal declaration of a design to extend universally the new principles of government adopted in France, and to encourage disorder and revolt in all countries, even in those which are neutral. If this interpretation, which you represent as injurious to the convention, could admit of any doubt, it is but too well justified by the conduct of the convention itself: and the application of these principles to the king's dominions has been shewn unequivocally, by the public reception given to the promoters of sedition in this country, and by the speeches made to them precisely at the time of this decree, and since on several different occasions.

"Yet notwithstanding all these proofs, supported by other circumstances which are but too notorious, it would have been with pleasure that we should have seen here such explanations and such a conduct as would have satisfied the dignity and honor of England with respect to what has already passed; and would have offered a sufficient security in future for the maintenance of that respect towards the rights, the government, and the tranquillity of neutral powers, which they have on every account the right to expect.

"Neither this satisfaction nor this security is found in the terms of an explanation which still declares to the promoters of sedition in every country what are the cases in which they may count beforehand on the support and succour of France; and which reserves to that country the right of mixing herself in our internal affairs whenever she shall judge it proper, and on principles incompatible with the political institutions of all the countries of Europe. No one can avoid perceiving how much a declaration like this is calculated to encourage disorder and revolt in every country. No one can be ignorant how contrary it is to the respect which is reciprocally

reciprocally due from independent nations, nor how repugnant to those principles which the king has followed on his part, by abstaining at all times from any interference whatever in the internal affairs of France; and this contrast is alone sufficient to shew, not only that England cannot consider such an explanation as satisfactory, but that she must look upon it as a fresh avowal of those dispositions which she sees with so just an uneasiness and jealousy.

“ I proceed to the two other points of your explanation, which concern the general disposition of France with regard to the allies of Great Britain, and the conduct of the convention and its officers relative to the Scheld. The declaration which you there make, that France will not attack Holland so long as that power shall observe an exact neutrality, is conceived in nearly the same terms with that which you was charged to make in the name of his most christian majesty, in the month of July last. Since that first declaration was made, an officer, stating himself to be employed in the service of France, has openly violated both the territory and the neutrality of the republic, in going up the Scheld to attack the citadel of Antwerp, notwithstanding the determination of the government not to grant this passage, and the formal protest by which they opposed it. Since the same declaration was made, the convention has thought itself authorized to annul the rights of the republic exercised within the limits of its own territory and enjoyed by virtue of the same treaties by which her independence is secured; and at the very moment when under the name of an amicable explanation, you renewed to me in the same terms the promise of respecting the independence and rights of England and her allies, you announce to me, that those in whose name you speak intend to maintain these open and injurious aggressions.

“ It is not, certainly, on such a declaration as this that any reliance can be placed for the continuance of public tranquillity.

“ But I am unwilling to leave, without a more particular

ticular reply, what you say on the subject of the Scheld. If it were true that this question is in itself of little importance, this would only serve to prove more clearly, that it was brought forward only for the purpose of insulting the allies of England, by the infraction of their neutrality, and by the violation of their rights, which the faith of treaties obliges us to maintain. But you cannot be ignorant that here the utmost importance is attached to those principles which France wishes to establish by this proceeding, and to those consequences which would naturally result from them, and that not only those principles and those consequences will never be admitted by England, but that she is, and ever will be, ready to oppose them with all her force.

"France can have no right to annul the stipulations relative to the Scheld, unless she have also the right to set aside equally all the other treaties between all the powers of Europe, and all the other rights of England, or of her allies. She can even have no pretence to interfere in the question of opening the Scheld, unless she were the sovereign of the low countries, or had the right to dictate laws to all Europe.

"England never will consent that France shall arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure, and under the pretence of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the only judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties, and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers.—This government, adhering to the maxims which it has followed for more than a century, will also never see with indifference that France shall make herself, either directly or indirectly, sovereign of the low countries, or general arbitress of the rights and liberties of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights.

"With

“ With respect to that character of ill will which is endeavoured to be found in the conduct of England towards France, I cannot discuss it, because you speak of it in general terms only, without alledging a single fact. All Europe has seen the justice and generosity which have characterised the conduct of the king. His majesty has always been desirous of peace: he desires it still; but such as may be real and solid, and consistent with the interest and dignity of his own dominions, and with the general security of Europe.

“ On the rest of your paper, I say nothing. As to what relates to me and my colleagues, the king's ministers owe to his majesty the account of their conduct, and I have no answer to give you on this subject, any more than on that of the appeal which you propose to make to the English nation. This nation, according to that constitution by which its liberty and prosperity are secured, and which it will always be able to defend against every attack, direct or indirect, will never have with foreign powers connection or correspondence except through the organ of its king; of a king whom it loves and reveres, and who has never for an instant separated his rights, his interests, and his happiness, from the rights, the interests, and the happiness of his people.

“ I have the honor to be, &c.

“ Grenville.”

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, dated January 7, 1793.

“ The undersigned minister plenipotentiary from the French republic has transmitted to the executive council the answer which his excellency lord Grenville has addressed to him on his note of the twenty-seventh of December. He has thought it his duty not to wait for the instructions which will be the necessary result of it, in order to transmit to that minister the new orders which he has received from the executive council. The declaration which lord Grenville has made to him, that his Britannic majesty did not acknowledge him as minister plenipotentiary

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plenipotentiary from the French republic, has not appeared to him as if it ought to prevent him. This declaration cannot in any respect alter or destroy the quality of delegate from the French government, with which the undersigned is evidently invested, or hinder him, in such decisive circumstances, from addressing to the ministers of his Britannic majesty, in the name of the French people, of which he is the organ, the following note.

"The executive council of the French republic has been informed that the British parliament is about to pass a law relative to foreigners, the rigorous proceedings of which will subject them to measures the more arbitrary, as the secretaries of state of his Britannic majesty will have the liberty of restraining or extending them, according to their views and their pleasure. The executive council, knowing the religious fidelity of the English people in fulfilling their engagements, could not but suppose that the French would be expressly excepted from this law. The treaty of navigation and of commerce, concluded in 1786 between the states, ought formally to secure them from it. This treaty stipulates,

ARTICLE IV.

"The subjects and inhabitants of the respective dominions of the two sovereigns shall have liberty to come and go freely and securely, without licence or passport, general or special, by land or by sea, and to return from thence, to remain there, or to pass through the same, and therein to buy and purchase, as they please, all things necessary for their subsistence and use, and they shall mutually be treated with all kindness and favor, provided however, &c. &c."

"But instead of finding in the bill proposed a just exception in favor of France, the executive council has been convinced, by positive declarations made in the two houses of parliament, by ministerial explanations and interpretations, that this project of a law, under a general term of designation, was principally directed against the French,

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“ When the British ministry has proposed a law which would so expressly violate the treaty of commerce, when they have openly announced their intention of putting it into execution against the French alone, their first care must, no doubt, have been to attempt to cover this extraordinary measure with an appearance of necessity, and to prepare before hand a justification, sooner or later necessary, by loading the French nation with reproaches; by representing it to the English people as an enemy of its constitution; by accusing it, without being able to furnish any proof, and in the most injurious terms, with having sought to foment troubles in England. The executive council has already repelled with indignation such suspicions. If some men, cast out from the bosom of France, have spread themselves in Great Britain with the criminal intentions of agitating the people, of leading them to revolt, has not England laws to protect the public order? Could she not punish them? The republic would assuredly not have interposed in their favour.— Such men are not Frenchmen.

“ Reproaches so little founded, imputations so insidious, will with difficulty succeed, in justifying in the eyes of Europe a conduct, the comparison of which with that constantly held by France towards Great Britain will suffice to demonstrate its injustice and malevolence. The French nation, become free, has not only not ceased to express in all forms its desire to strengthen its connection with the English people, but it has realized this desire with all its power, by receiving as allies, as brothers, all the individuals of the English nation. In the midst of the combats of liberty and of despotism, in the midst of the most violent agitations, it has honored itself by religious respect for all foreigners residing within it, and particularly for the English, whatever might be their opinions, their conduct, and their connections with the enemies of liberty; every where they have been assisted, succoured with every kind of benevolence and favor; and it would be as the reward for this generous conduct that the French would find themselves perhaps alone subjected

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to an act of parliament which would grant to the English government the most arbitrary latitude of authority against foreigners, which would subject them to the taking licences or passports for coming, going, and remaining in England, which would allow the secretaries of state to subject them without reasons, and on a mere suspicion, to the most odious forms, to fix a circuit, the bounds of which they could not pass, and even to cast them out of the territory of Great Britain at their pleasure.

"It is evident, that all these clauses are contrary to the letter of the treaty of commerce, the fourth article of which extends to all Frenchmen without distinction; and it is too much to be feared, that in consequence of the determination which his Britannic majesty has thought it right to take, of breaking off all communication between the governments of the two countries, even the French merchants may find themselves frequently unable, to avail themselves of the exception which the bill has made in favour of those who *'shall prove that they came to England for affairs of commerce.'*

"It is thus that the British government has first chosen to break a treaty to which England owes a great part of its actual prosperity, burthensome to France, wrested by address and ability from the unskilfulness or from the corruption of the agents of a government it has destroyed; a treaty which it has, however, never ceased to observe religiously; and it is at the very moment when France is accused in the British parliament of violating treaties, that the public conduct of the two governments offers a contrast so proper to justify the retorting the accusation.

"All the powers of Europe would have a right, doubtless, to complain of the hardship of this bill, if ever it obtained the force of law; but it is France especially, the inhabitants of which, secured from its penalties by a solemn treaty, appear nevertheless to be exclusively menaced by them; it is France that has the right to pretend to a more speedy, and more particular satisfaction.

"The executive council might immediately have accepted

cepted the rupture of the treaty which the English government seems to have held out to it; but it was unwilling to precipitate any of its measures; and it has chosen, before it makes known its definite resolution, to afford the British ministry the opportunity of a frank and candid explanation. The undersigned has received orders, in consequence, to demand of lord Grenville to inform him by a speedy, clear, and categorical answer, whether, under the general denomination of foreigners in the bill on which the house are occupied, the government of Great Britain means likewise to include the French.

This paper, dated January 7th and signed by CHAUVELIN, was on the same day returned as inadmissible, on the ground that he had assumed therein a character which was not acknowledged. Another letter of the same date, on the exportation of corn, and on the flagrant proofs of the most hostile partiality against France by permitting the exportation of foreign wheat to all ports except those of that country, was not more successful. In answer to this Letter, which Lord GRENVILLE did not receive till the ninth of January, he said, "that he did not know in what capacity M. Chauvelin had addressed it to him; but that, in every case, it would be necessary to know the resolutions taken in France, in consequence of what had already passed, before his lordship could enter into any new explanations." CHAUVELIN, in reply, described himself as minister plenipotentiary of the French republic, by whom, he added, the conduct of the English government was regarded as a manifest infraction of the treaty of commerce; and that consequently he ceased to consider herself as bound by that treaty.—Some farther messages passed between both parties, relating chiefly to an interview, which took place on the thirteenth of January, when M. CHAUVELIN delivered to lord GRENVILLE the following paper, which he himself had received from M. le BRUN the day before.

"The provisional executive council of the French republic, previous to their answering in a more particular manner each of the heads comprized in the note which has been remitted to them on the part of the ministry of his

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his Britannic majesty, will begin by renewing to the said ministry the most express assurances of their sincere desire of preserving peace and harmony between France and England.

“ The sentiments of the French nation towards the English have been manifested during the whole course of the revolution, in so constant, so unanimous a manner, that there cannot remain the smallest doubt of the esteem which it has vowed them, and of its desire of having them for friends. It is therefore with the greatest repugnancy the republic would see itself forced to a rupture, much more contrary to her own inclination than to her interest. Before we come to such an unpleasant extremity explanations are necessary; and the matter is of so high an importance, that the executive council did not think it proper to trust to the ever unacknowledged ministry of a secret agent; hence they have deemed it to be expedient in all points to charge citizen Chauvelin with it, though he be no otherwise acknowledged before his Britannic majesty, than on the late king's account.

“ The opinion of the executive council was justified on this occasion, by the manner in which our negotiations were at the same time transacted in Spain, where citizen Bourgoing was exactly in the same situation as citizen Chauvelin at London; yet this did not prevent the ministers of his catholic majesty from treating with him for a convention of neutrality, the declaration of which is to be exchanged at Paris, between the minister for foreign affairs and the Spanish chargé d'affaires. We will even add, that the prime minister of his Catholic majesty, in writing officially on this subject to citizen Bourgoing, did not forget to give him his title of minister plenipotentiary from France. The example of a power of the first order, such as Spain, induced the executive council to hope to find the same facility at London. However, the executive council freely own, that this demand of negotiations has not all the rigor of diplomatic form, and that citizen Chauvelin is not regularly

regularly enough authorized. In order to remove this obstacle entirely, to discard every reproach of having stopped, by the mere want of formality, a negotiation on the success of which the tranquillity of two great nations is depending, they have taken the resolution of sending letters of credence to citizen Chauvelin, which would furnish him with the means of treating in all the severity of diplomatic forms.

“ Now, to come to the three points which can alone make an object of difficulty at the court of London, the executive council observe, respecting the first, which is the decree of the nineteenth of November, that we have not been properly understood by the ministry of his Britannic majesty, when they accuse us of having given an explanation *which announces to the seditious of all nations what are the cases in which they may previously count on the support and assistance of France.* Nothing could be more foreign than this reproach to the sentiments of the national convention, and to the explanation we have given of them; and we did not think it were possible we should be charged with the open design of favouring the *seditious*, at the very moment when we declare, that it would be wronging the national convention if they were charged with the project of protecting insurrections and with the commotions that may break out in any corner of a state, of joining the ring-leaders, and of their making the cause of a few private individuals that of the French nation.

“ We have said, and we desire to repeat it, that the decree of the nineteenth of November could not have any application, unless to the *single case*, in which the *general will* of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should call the French nation to its assistance and fraternity. Sedition can certainly never be construed into the *general will*. These two ideas mutually repel each other, since a sedition is not and cannot be any other than the movement of a small number against the nation at large; and this movement would cease to be seditious, provided all the members of a society should

should at once rise, either to correct their government, or to change its form *in toto*, or for any other object.

"The Dutch were assuredly not seditious when they formed the generous resolution of shaking off the yoke of Spain; and when the general will of that nation called for the assistance of France, it was not reputed a crime in Henry the fourth, or in Elizabeth of England, to have listened to them. The knowledge of the *general will* is the only basis of the transactions of nations with each other; and we can only treat with any government whatever on this principle, that such a government is deemed the organ of the general will of the nation governed.

"Thus, when by this natural interpretation, the decree of the nineteenth of November is reduced to what it truly implies, it will be found, that it announces nothing more than an act of the general will, and that beyond any doubt, and so effectually founded in right, that it was scarcely worth the trouble to express it. On this account, the executive council thinks that the evidence of this right might perhaps have been dispensed with by the national convention, and did not deserve to be made the object of particular decree. But with the interpretation which precedes it, it cannot give uneasiness to any nation whatever.

"It appears that the ministers of his Britannic majesty have nothing to object to the declaration relative to Holland, since the single observation made by them on that subject belongs to the discussion of the Scheld. It is this point, therefore, to which we are confined.

"We repeat it, this question is in itself of little moment. The ministers of Great Britain conclude that *it only serves to prove more clearly that it was brought forward merely for the purpose of insulting the allies of England.* We shall reply with much less warmth and prejudice, that this question is absolutely indifferent to England, that it is of little importance to Holland, but that it is extremely important to the Belgians. That it is indifferent to England it is not necessary to prove, and its vital import to Holland is evinced by this fact, that the

the productions of the Belgians pass equally by the canals which terminate at Ostend. Its great importance to the Belgians is proved by the numerous advantages the port of Antwerp presents to them. 'Tis therefore on account of this importance, 'tis to restore to the Belgians the enjoyment of so precious a right, and not to offend any one, that France has declared herself ready to support them in the exercise of so legitimate a right.

"But is France authorized to break the stipulations which are opposed to the liberty of the Scheld? If the rights of nature and those of nations are consulted, not France alone, but all the nations of Europe are authorized to do it—there can be no doubt of it.

"If we consult public law, we shall say that it ought to be nothing but the application of the principles of the general rights of nations to particular circumstances in which nations are placed with regard to each other; inasmuch that every particular treaty repugnant to such principles can only be regarded as the work of violence. We more over add, in relation to the Scheld, that this treaty was concluded without the participation of the Belgians. The emperor, to secure the possession of the Low Countries, sacrificed, without scruple, the most inviolable of rights. Master of those fine provinces, he governed them, as Europe has seen, with the rod of absolute despotism, respected only those of their privileges which it imported him to preserve, and destroyed, or perpetually struggled against the rest. France enters into war with the house of Austria, expels it from the Low Countries, and calls back to freedom those people whom the court of Vienna had devoted to slavery; their chains are broken; they re-enters into all the rights which the house of Austria had taken away from them. How can that which they possessed with respect to the Scheld be excepted, particularly when that right is only of importance to those who are deprived of it?—for what remains, France has too good a political creed to be afraid to avow the principles of. The executive council declares, not with a view of yielding to some expressions of threatening language, but to

to render homage to truth, that the French republic does not intend to erect itself into an universal arbitrator of the treaties which bind nations. She will know how to respect other governments, as she will take care to make her own respected. She does not wish to impose laws on any one, and will not suffer any one to impose laws upon her. She has renounced, and again renounces, every conquest; and her occupation of the low countries shall only continue during the war, and the time which may be necessary to the Belgians to insure and consolidate their liberty; after which let them be independent and happy—France will find her recompence in their felicity.

When that nation shall be found in the full enjoyment of their liberty,—when its general will can lawfully declare itself without shackles,—then if England and Holland still attach some importance to the opening of the Scheld, they may put the affair into a direct negotiation with Belgia. If the Belgians, by any motive whatever, consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheld, France will not oppose it: she will know how to respect their independence, even in their errors.

After so frank a declaration, which manifests such a sincere desire of peace, his Britannic majesty's ministers ought not to have any doubts with regard to the intentions of France. If her explanations appear insufficient, and if we are still obliged to hear a haughty language; if hostile preparations are continued in the English ports; after having exhausted every means to preserve peace, we will prepare for war, with a sense of the justice of our cause, and of our efforts to avoid this extremity: we will fight the English, whom we esteem, with regret; but we will fight them without fear.

The explanations contained in this paper being deemed satisfactory by lord GRENVILLE, M. CHAUVELIN wrote another letter to his lordship, on the seventeenth of January, in order to be informed, whether the king would receive his letters of credence; and what conduct his majesty's ministers meant to hold, with respect to him and persons composing his household, in consequence of the

law against foreigners. This led first to the rejection of his letters of credence; next to the disavowal of his retaining any public character at the English court after the death of the French king; and lastly to an order for his quitting the kingdom within the term of eight days from the twenty-fourth of January.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

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